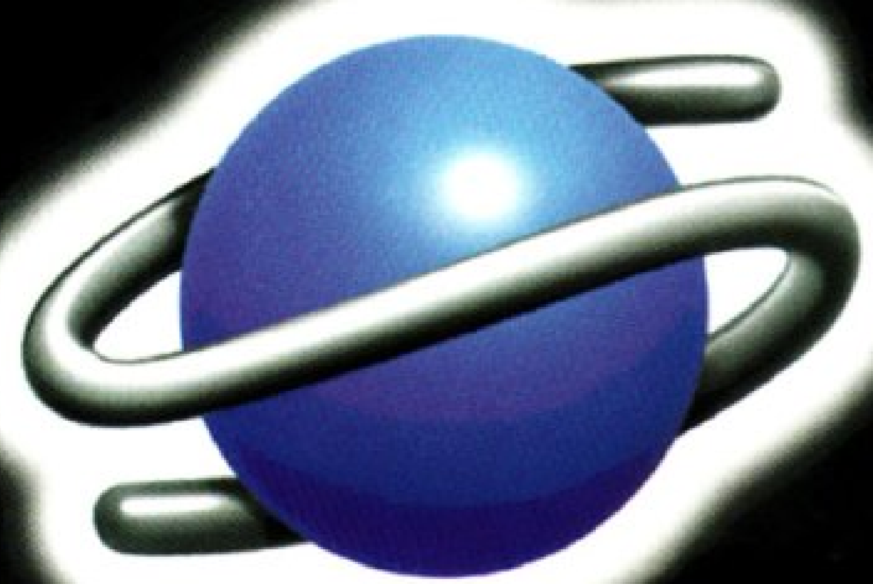
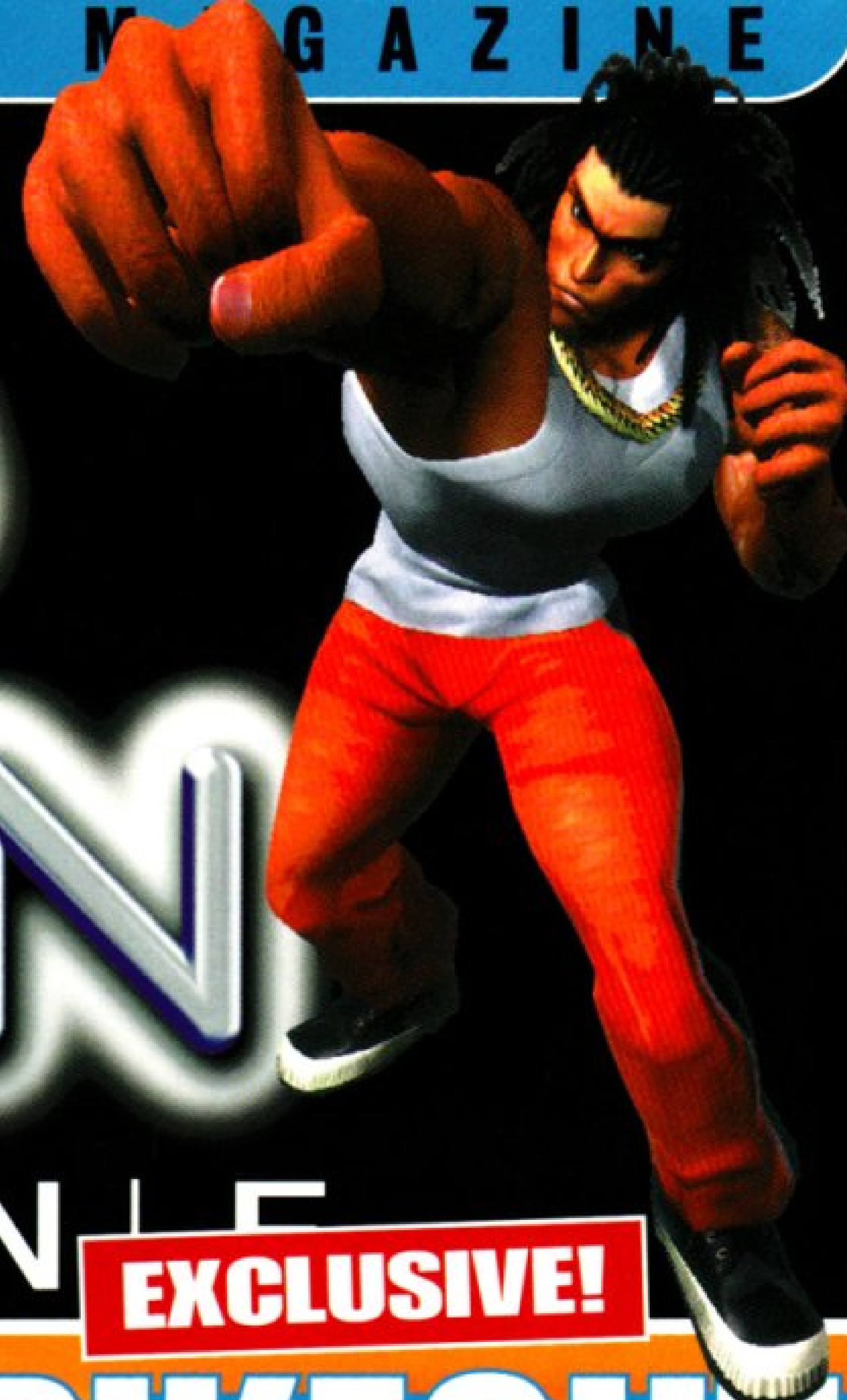
THE OFFICIAL SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE



SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE





ISSUE 35 £2.95
SEPTEMBER 1998

EXCLUSIVE!

SPIKEOUT

Ace AM2 Slug Fest!

Sorted! 16 Pages of Tips

ROAR POWER!

Godzilla Hits Dreamcast!

DEEP FEAR

Better Than Resident Evil?



PLUS! SONIC ADVENTURE, D2, ... ET FIGHTER, DAYTONA 2 INTERVIEW, RADIANT SILV... SH... G FORCE 3 GUIDE... AND MORE!

Ahoy There!

There are large schemes afoot here at SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE. In the last issue we announced our plans to begin the metamorphosis of SSM into an all-new, more diverse Sega-based titles. Our plans are at a more advanced stage now and we should have something fairly substantial to show you next month. The basic plan is this - to continue the most in-depth Dreamcast coverage around, backed up with more interviews with the key players in the Sega world. In addition to this, we've fostered excellent relationships with the most powerful players in the arcade industry - that's why SSM has been able to bring you in-depth inquisitions month after month with the previously publicity-shy AM2.

The need for a more diverse Sega magazine has never been more pronounced. This issue, just about the entire News section is packed with exclusive news on what is definitely the most exciting console launch the world has ever known!

The European developers who so recently turned their backs on Sega and the Saturn have also returned, bringing their major third party franchise games with them, along with a raft of intriguing original products.

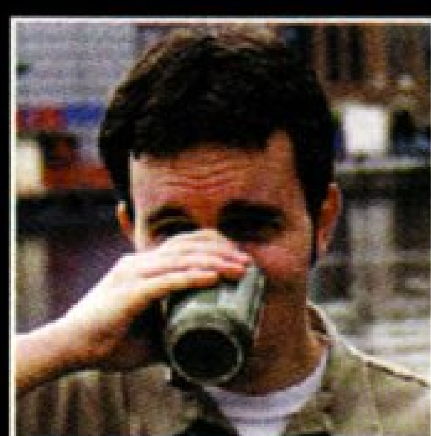
Expect to see some exciting stuff from this year's ECTS trade show... and as for next issue? well, does the most in-depth feature on the Dreamcast Sonic game sound at all interesting?

RICH LEADBETTER





RICH
He Who Must Be Obeyed, mess with Rich and you WILL pay the price. Has photographic evidence as proof to deter would-be offenders.



MATT
Organises everything, tidies the office, talks to people on the 'phone and just generally sorts things out. Would make someone a good wife.



WARREN
Lives in a sealed bunker three miles beneath the surface of Japan, so we don't really know what he's like. Sounds a bit peculiar on the 'phone.



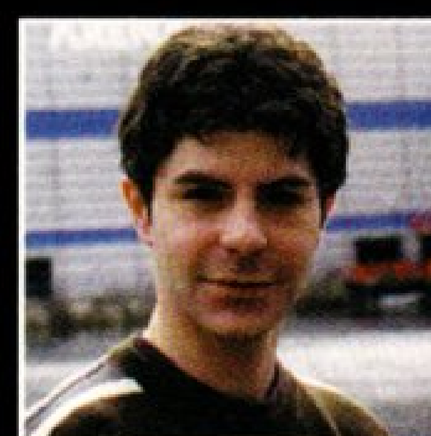
LEE
With stubble and cropped hair, Lee looks a bit like George Michael. Which is a coincidence, as Lee also likes to (censored!)



GARY
Cyberdyne Systems model GC02 cybernetic organism. Sent back from the year 2029 to help Sega survive these uncertain times.



JASON
Has potentially world-changing moments of clarity and vision, but tends to forget them before his revolutionary plans can be started.



NICK
"Sorry I'm late, I was seized by an uncontrollable urge to visit Norwich and build a model of Dale Winton out of mashed potato."



SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE 35 CONTENTS

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Editor **Richard Leadbetter**
Deputy Editor **Matt Yeo**
Art Editor **Jason McEvoy**
Deputy Art Editor **Nick Paterson**
Senior Staff Writer **Lee Nutter**
Staff Writer **Gary Cutlack**

Contributors **Yas Hunter, Tom Cox, Alisa Heaney**
Japan Editor **Warren Harrod**
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Editorial **37-39 Millharbour, The Isle Of Dogs, London, E14 9TZ. Telephone: (0171) 972 6700 (NO tips calls) Fax (0171) 972 6710**

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That's yer lot... get outta here!

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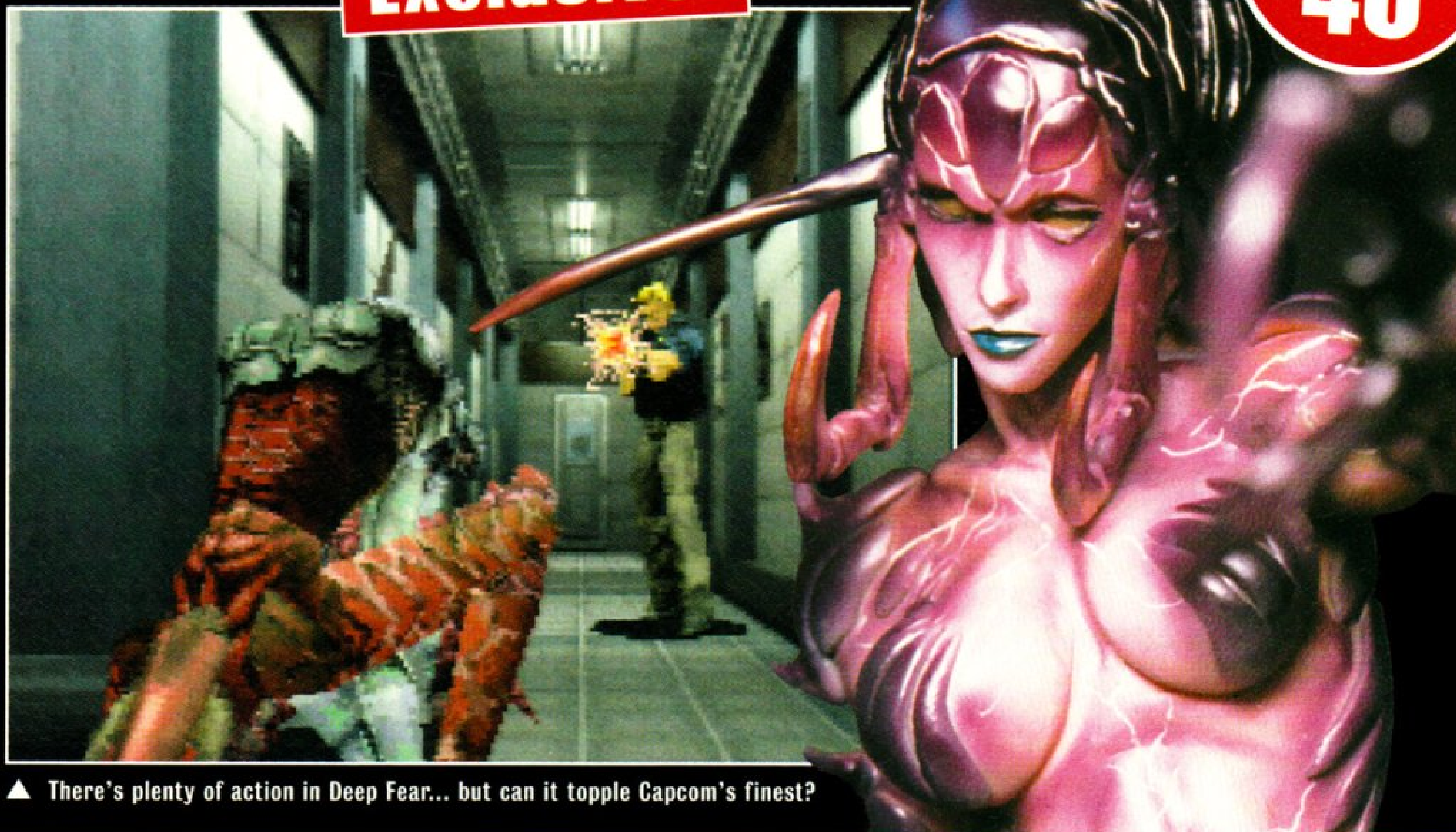
Features

Deep Fear!

More from the terror beneath the waves in Sega's final massive project for the Sega Saturn? Is it better than Resident Evil?

Exclusive!

Page 40



▲ There's plenty of action in Deep Fear... but can it topple Capcom's finest?



Pocket Fighter!

Page 52

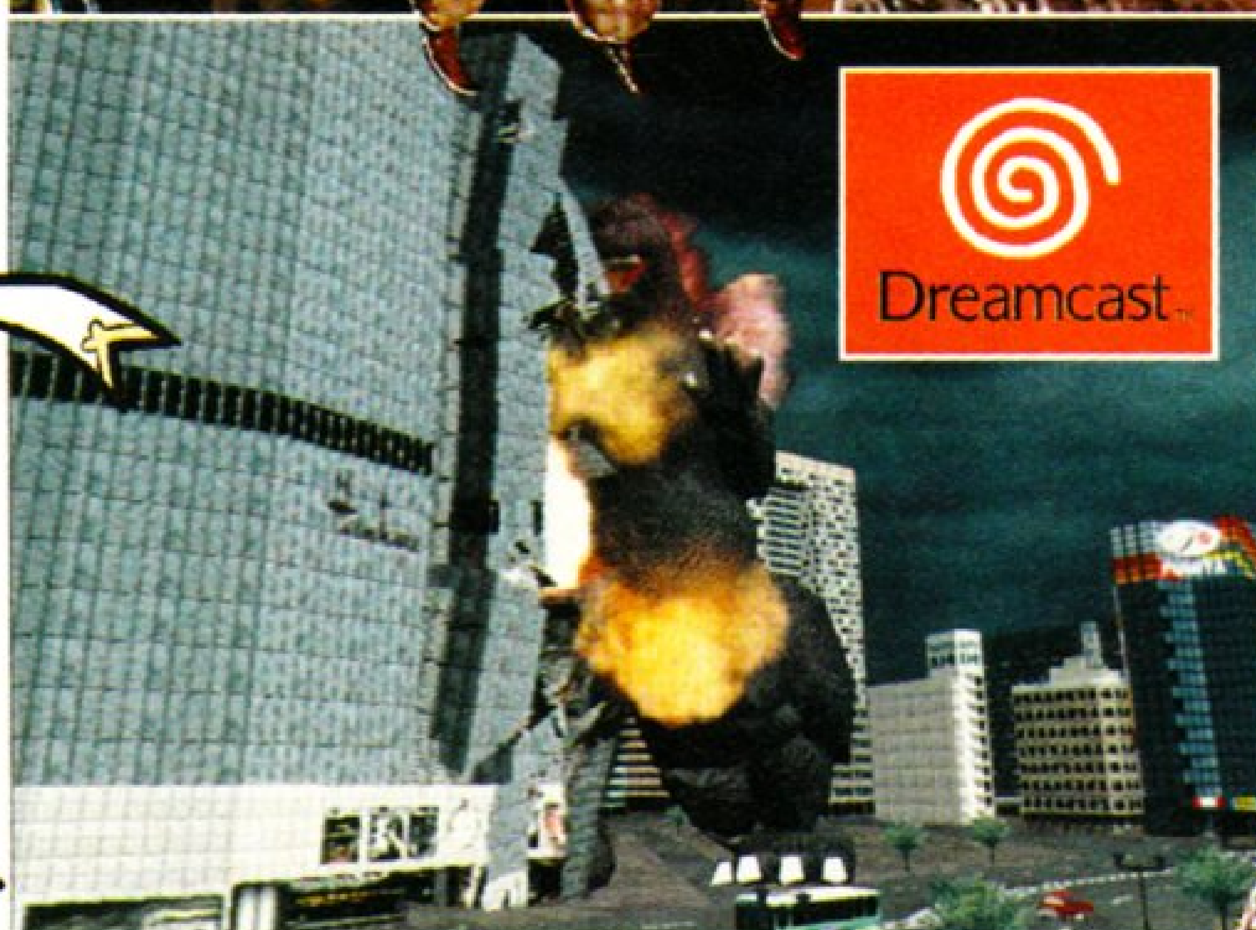


Capcom returns with another 4MB wonder... it's cutesy fighting action to the max!

Godzilla!

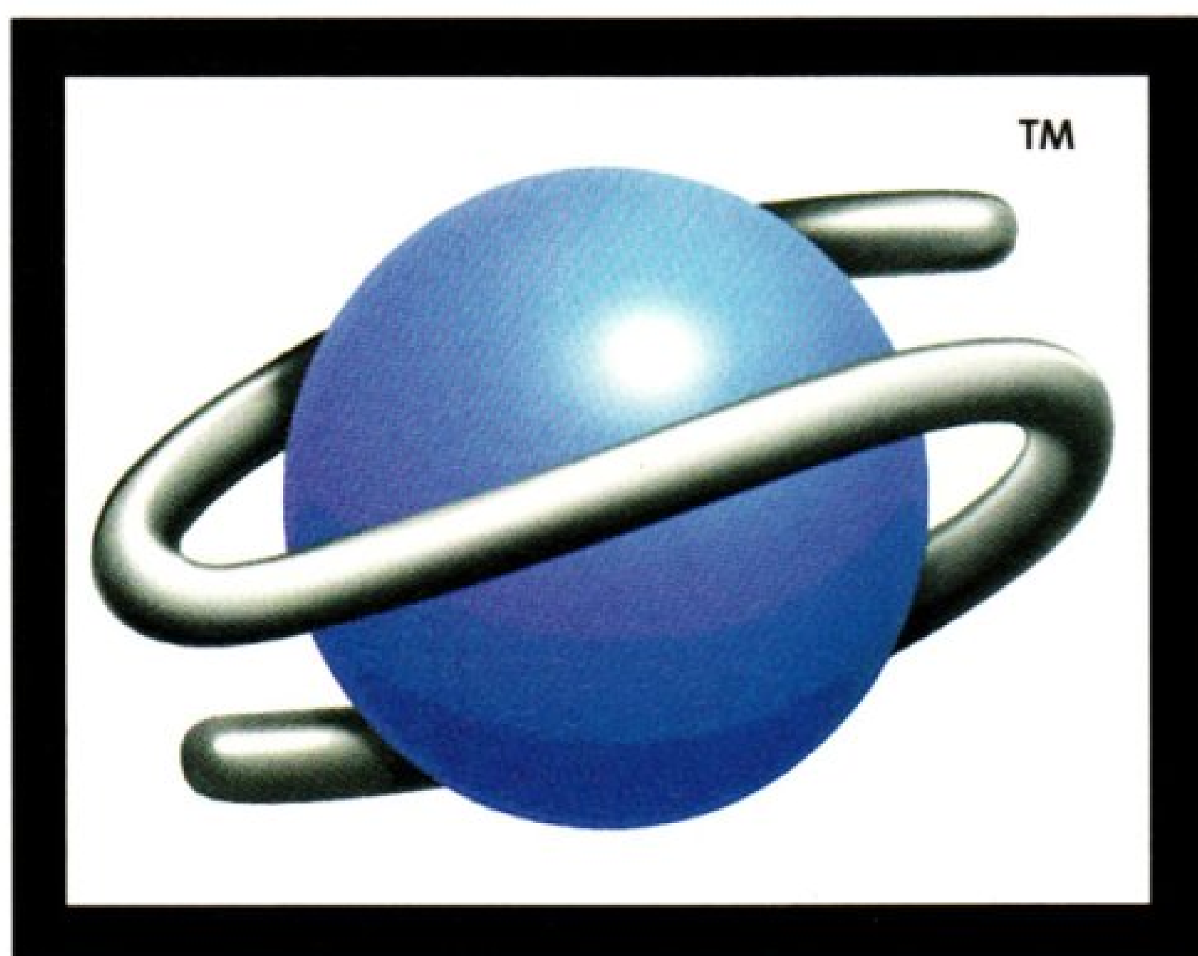
Toho's mighty rampaging lizard arrives on Dreamcast in a stunning smash 'em up! See it and believe the power!

Page 06





▲ SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE continues its unstoppable, exclusive Dreamcast coverage. This month: GODZILLA!



NEWS

Godzilla!

Breathes fire into Dreamcast!

Sega of Japan's first internal game revealed! ■ Control the mighty mutant lizard itself and some its monster enemies too! ■ Check out the MOST new screenshots of this massive destruct-a-thon!

Godzilla is stomping his way onto Dreamcast in an unprecedented game of mass destruction! This month Sega announced its plan to bring movie-quality carnage to the Dreamcast with its first game announcement.

Despite the movie not performing as well as expected in the US or in Europe, Godzilla remains a hugely bankable commodity in his native country of Japan. What's more, the American movie actually opened very well in the Land of the Rising Sun. Sega obviously knows a good bet when it sees one and released details of its 128-bit Godzilla game days before the movie opened. However, the catch is that the game is NOT officially licensed from the US movie - unlike the Dreamcast VMS "Tamagotchi" which definitely is! Confused? Let us explain.

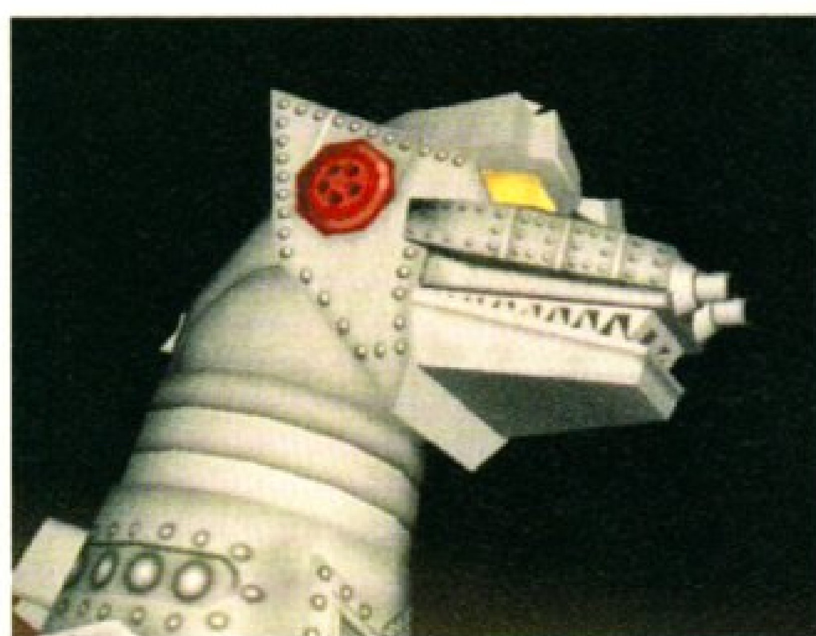
The forthcoming Dreamcast game is based on the original Toho films and show the rampaging giant lizard just as he is in the Japanese movies that have been made about him since the 1950s. It's a fairly obvious choice when you think about it as the new Godzilla movie doesn't actually feature any of the established rogue's gallery, including the likes of Mothra and Ghidra. The good news is that you can expect to see them in all their cheesy, rubberised glory in the Dreamcast title!

WHAT'S THE POINT?

The aim of the game isn't really going to surprise anyone. The Godzilla movies are replete with acts of massive urban destruction and, as you can see from the various stunning screenshots dotted around these pages, that appears to be one of the major aims of this game.



▲ Nope, this isn't a cool FMV intro...





▲ ...these are actual in-game shots!



▲ Oooh... look. An enormous city just waiting to be trampled on by a mutant lizard.

Exclusive shots!
NEC reveals its Dreamcast games!
PAGE 12

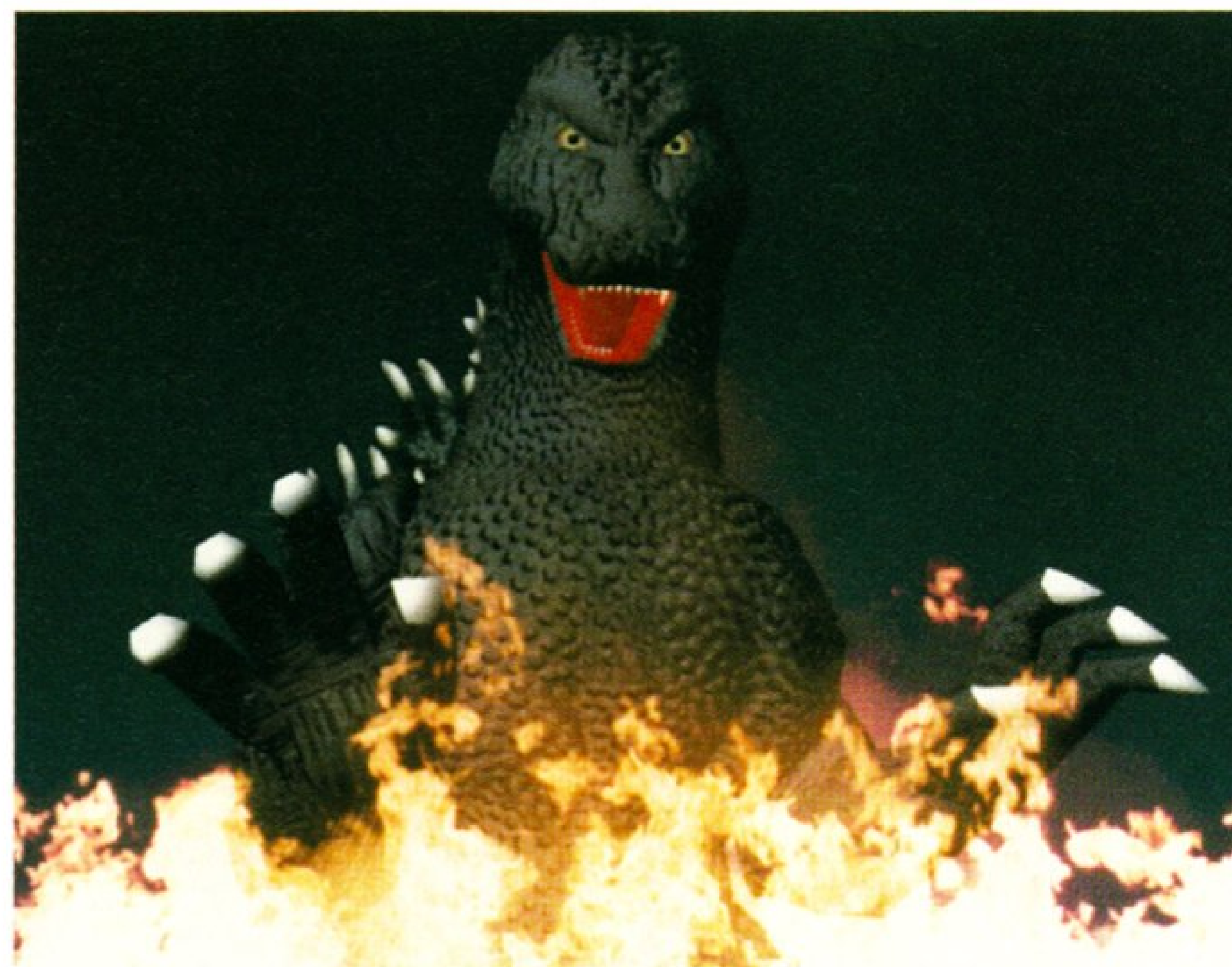
Godzilla VMS
We've got our hands on this hot hardware!
PAGE 08

Euro-Developers
Top UK talent to produce 128-bit titles!
PAGE 16

New D2 shots!
The latest screenshots from Warp!
PAGE 18



▲ Not much is known about the game, but expect mass destruction to be the main aim.



▲ Check out the incredible quality of these visuals! Godzilla will be like nothing seen before!

Godzilla himself is beautifully rendered, looking identical to his old movie incarnation (bar the odd fold of rubber that is!), and the cityscapes contained in the game are based on actual Japanese urban environments. Sega is so confident of its realistic rendering abilities that it reckons Japanese gamers will have no problems at all in recognising individual streets - presumably before Godzilla razes them to the ground, that is!

We're also being promised some absolutely incredible creature animation here as the mighty monster smashes into buildings, causing explosions and generally making a complete mess of things as the cityscape is demolished under Godzilla's all-powerful lizard strength.



▲ Even Mecha-Godzilla is in there, complete with his awesome lighting bolt beam!

Dreamcast Godzilla looks set to capture the action and excitement of Toho's classic movies...

RUBBER MONSTER GRAPPLING

Of course, the high point of most of the Godzilla movies happened to be the bizarre fight scenes between our scaly "hero" and some of his similarly rubber-looking opponents. Just like Godzilla himself, Sega of Japan has gone for an accurate portrayal of our hero's enemies and the results are fairly stunning - just take a look at the picture of Mecha-Godzilla. Yup, that's an in-game screenshot!



▲ Grrr... I'm a big scary lizard... grrrr...

However, the big news is that, according to Sega, you don't get to control just Godzilla. Oh, no. Some of the other monsters become playable during the course of the game, although clearly the emphasis is in battering them into submission or making good use of Godzilla's fiery vindaloo-powered breath.



▲ Just wait 'til you see this bad boy moving!



▲ Godzilla's back... in '98, that is.



AND GODZOOOKY!



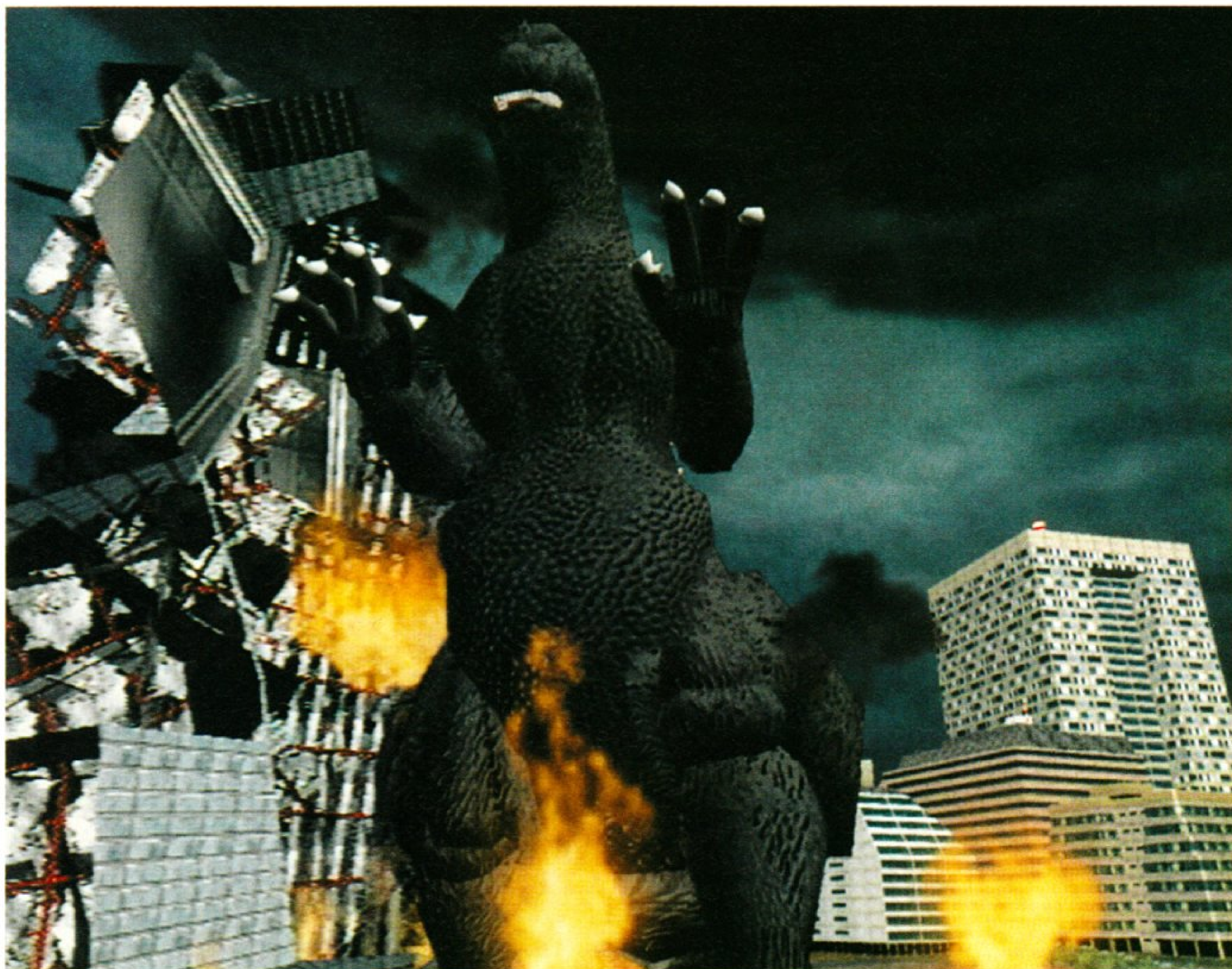
Considering that Godzilla is the latest project from the studio that brought us the mega-hit Independence Day, you'd expect that the film would have done just a bit better than it has in America. Perhaps the reduced plot and lacking script (but more special effects and 'fun') had something to do with it. Maybe they should have checked out Hanna Barbera's hilarious 1979 Godzilla cartoon - star of many episodes of Saturday Super Store here in the UK?

The premise was simple. The crew of the explorer liner, Calico, basically sailed around the globe getting into all sorts of large monster-related trouble. This would invariably cause Calico skipper, Captain Majors, to reach for a special Sonic Summons control which would bring about the arrival of Godzilla to save the day - usually surfacing from any kind of available water mass.

Er... just one question. How come Godzilla always just happened to be in the same area as the Calico? What if Captain Majors accidentally pressed the button while on the crapper? Would Godzilla emerge from the pan given the lack of other water sources in the proximity? And just what was the point of 'Zilla's cheery dino-pal Godzooky? Eh? EH? A world demands answers!







▲ We expect one of the key features of Godzilla to be the freedom to roam wherever you please and destroy anything you want. Sounds cool.



▲ Trash! Maim! Burn! Destroy! Heh, heh...

JAPAN FIGHTS BACK

If all of this urban destruction and monster grappling wasn't exciting enough, Godzilla faces even more problems in the form of the legendary G-Force warriors - Japan's defence force who regularly did battle with the mighty one in the original movie series. For Godzilla purists, the good news is that Sega is planning to incorporate some of their outlandish anti-zilla technology including the inevitable mazer cannon, mazer tank and the bizarre-sounding Super-X.



AND FINALLY...

Although the Dreamcast game is based on the original movies, and the VMS title is licensed from the new film, the two games are compatible. Sega isn't releasing too many details yet, but what we can definitely tell you is that playing the Dreamcast game with the Godzilla VMS will definitely have an effect. Who knows what we can look forward to? We'll have to wait and see...



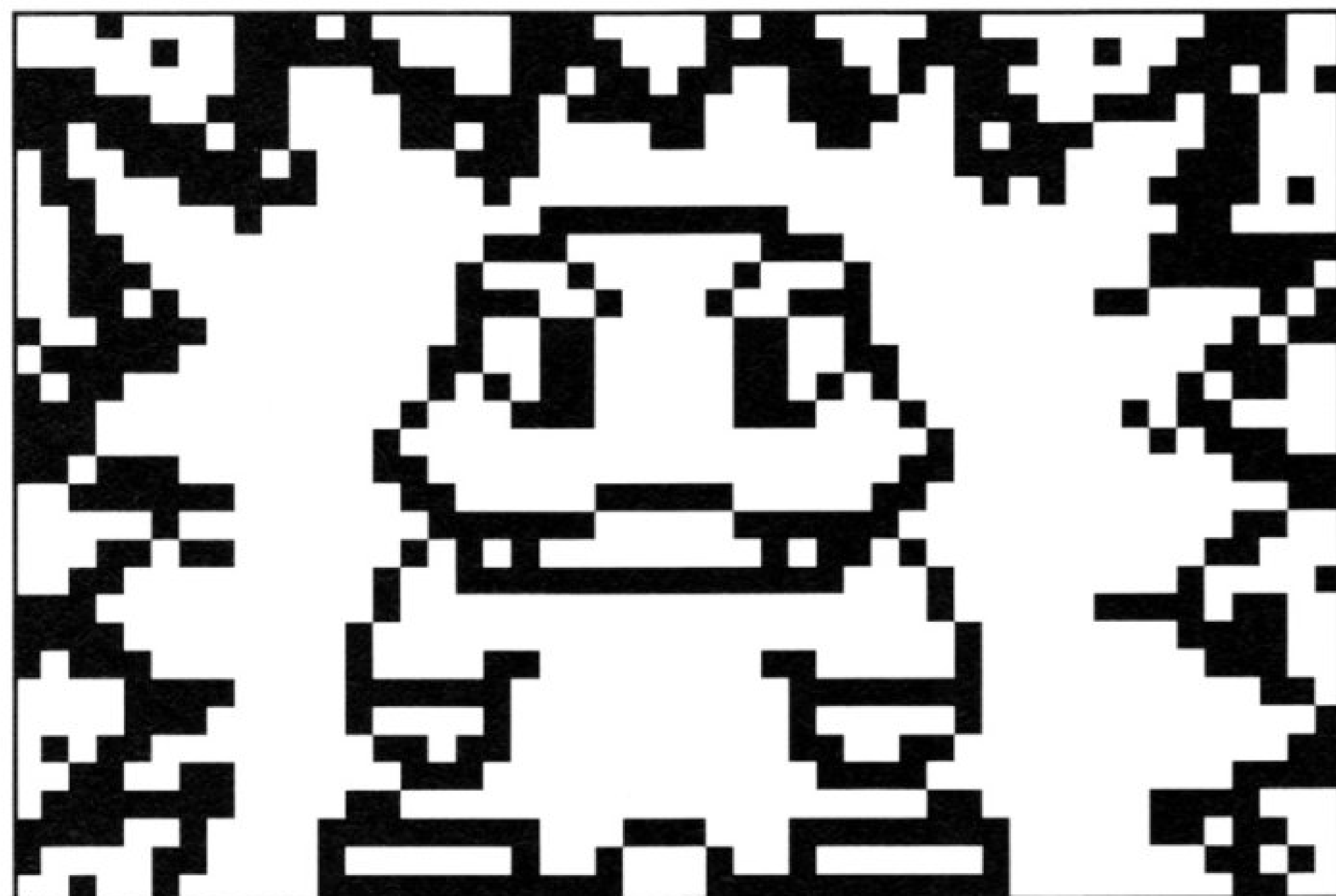
THOSE GODZILLA LYRICS

You might think that we're just a bit obsessed with the old Godzilla cartoon series. And you're right. It's hilarious and it's on Cable at the moment. You must check out the intro music:

Up from the depths/ Thirty storeys high/ Breathing Fire/ His head in the sky!
Godzilla!/ Godzilla!/ Godzilla! And Godzooooky!

Cue comedy interlude with the aforementioned dino, puffing out smoke as he tries to breathe fire, falling over in a comedic, nay hilarious fashion, etc ...

Godzilla Launches VMS!



▲ It may look a little primitive, but the Godzilla VMS is an indication of future titles.

Sega chose the big screen opening of the Godzilla movie in Japan in order to launch its own VMS peripheral, which includes a Tamagotchi-style game based on the celluloid monster.

The special edition VMS (or PDA as Sega of Japan is now calling it) features an intriguing game that sees you hatching your own Godzilla egg and raising the creature by placing it in different environments. Each of these conditions toughens up your hatchling in different ways. A great deal of careful rearing needs to take place before your Godzilla creature may be put into battle against other VMS creations.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

The VMS Godzilla game doesn't actually give you a whole lot of action in the early rearing stages. In fact, there's little you can do apart from play a bizarre game that sees your creature defend itself against missile attacks (guess where the incoming projectiles are going to land before they are launched - hardly super-exciting).

However, once your creature has grown, you may access the full range of options, including the ability to examine your monster's DNA.



But the real fun comes from connecting your VMS to another and indulging in a bit of monster battling as in Pocket Monster (the current big thing in hand-held toys in Japan). Here you do battle with your opponent, the winner sucking out the losing monster's DNA. This allows you to mix it with your own, producing a new, hopefully stronger monster. Special moves are also available, some of which affect all monsters, although you'll find that certain beasties develop immunity.

The losing creature is wiped from existence, the owner having to restart his monster from scratch. It's a harsh world, isn't it?

WHAT ABOUT DREAMCAST?

We thought that getting hold of the VMS might give us some clue as to how it connects to the Dreamcast and what functionality it might have in conjunction with the new Sega hardware. However, few new facts have been gleaned.

The Godzilla VMS seems to be able to play its game and keep the time and date, but if you're after any of the data organisation mentioned in the spec, you're in for a disappointment. As for as we can tell, this limited edition VMS doesn't seem to have any of these features (unless plugging it into the Dreamcast controller 'unlocks' functions). Until we get the standard VMS, we'll have to wait and see...



▲ Run for your lives, it's er... WHAT is it?



▲ Step 1: Hatch a baby Godzilla.



▲ Step 2: Battle fearsome monsters!



▲ Step 3: Dodge army missiles!



▲ With the awesome technological power of the Dreamcast, movie-quality visuals are now becoming a reality. We can't wait!



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NINTENDO - GOLDENEYE



For the N64 owners, you must start on the Cradle Stage on any difficulty setting. And, with a fifteen minute time limit, you must get as many kills as possible. Cock the Hammer it's time for action!

THE FINAL: SATURDAY 24TH OCTOBER 1998

It's a well known fact that if you need gaming information, you turn to SSM. And we reckon that our knowledge rubs off on you, the readers, making our followers some of the best, most elite gamesplayers on the planet. Which is why we want to put you to the test.

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Rules

To enter is easy. But there are a few 'rules' that have to be adhered to in order to stand any chance of beefing up your games collection and perchance getting your hands on that all-powerful Dreamcast machine!

- Firstly, you have to be aged 21 or younger. Sorry to all the Grandad gamers out there, but that's the way the cookie crumbles
- You need to send in five TWIX wrappers (empty of course) with the completed coupon
- Entries must be received by 31ST AUGUST 1998
- All entries will be CAREFULLY VETTED, so no cheating. You may be telephoned to verify scores or times submitted
- There will be a final on each format - N64, Sega Saturn and Playstation. 8 people will be selected to play in each of the finals, to be held at Virgin Megastore in Oxford Street, London on 24 October 1998. The 8 finalists on each format will consist of 5 of you who have sent us your best times/scores on the entry form below, the 2 finalists qualifying through the regional heats and last year's winner
- Promoters decision is final, no cash alternative
- The competition is open to all UK residents except employees and families of the promoter and EMAP, their agents and any one connected with the competition
- No responsibility is accepted for entries which are lost, delayed or damaged in the post
- The finalists will be notified by post by September 14th
- If you are under 16 an adult must be able to accompany you to the final
- Prize includes standard rate return rail fare to the Final in London
- Finalists' names will be available from the competition address to those sending an SAE marked 'results' after the closing date
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- The promoter is Mars Confectionery, a division of Mars UK Limited, Dundee Road, Slough SL1 4JX

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Entries must be received by 31ST AUGUST 1998

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____

PHONE NUMBER ______________ BEST TIME/SCORE ______________

If aged under 16, please ask a parent or guardian to read and then sign the following: I verify that the above details are correct and hereby give my permission for the above named person to take part in the final of the TWIX Gamesplayer of the Year 1998, should they be selected.

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The Warring States of Turb!

Exclusive screenshots of first Dreamcast RPG! ■ Same team also responsible for the multi-million selling Tamagotchi ■ Incredible real-time visuals only possible with the power of the Dreamcast ■ Winter '98 release scheduled for NEC's debut 128-bit title.

With the non-disclosure agreements which gags Dreamcast developers soon coming to an end, more and more companies are stepping forward to share details of their forthcoming products. One of the first to break free of Sega's shackles and dish the dirt on its Dreamcast development is NEC Home Electronics, a division of the same company responsible for the obscenely powerful graphics chip at the heart of the Dreamcast machine. With two unique Dreamcast games already in the works, NEC Home Electronics has granted SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE an exclusive sneak peek at its games, the first of which is The Warring States of Turb.

THE STORY SO FAR...

The game itself is best described as an action role-playing adventure and is based around the comical antics of a young girl, Jino-chan. Having crash-landed on the distant planet Raiyon, Jino-chan gets caught up in the raging war between cats and the sheep (eh?). Admittedly it sounds pretty bizarre, but aside from the weird and wacky plot, The Warring States of Turb appears to follow the standard RPG formula.





▲ There are plenty of characters to meet and interact with throughout the game.



▲ The characters may look pretty basic...



▲ ...but it's the gameplay that should shine.

AWESOME REAL-TIME MOVIES!

As with the incredible Shining Force III which is currently doing the business on the Saturn, The Warring States of Turb is essentially split into strategic battle and drama scenes. The latter take the form of real-time movies, enabling players to see the characters they've developed throughout the course of the game as they perform 'comical actions'. During these scenes, players are required to interact with other characters and answer certain questions, the responses to which determine the route and outcome of the game. As all the movies are calculated in real-time, they're 100% specific to your game, meaning only events that have actually occurred and characters you have met will appear. This is one of the key features of The Warring States of Turb which NEC Home Electronics insists only a machine with the awesome processing power of the Dreamcast can produce!

LET THE KILLING BEGIN!

The awesome real-time strategic battle scenes are similarly impressive and should keep RPG fans rivetted to their seats. There are basic two types of fighting techniques to get to grips with -



▲ The main thrust of the game are the awesome real-time battles, pictured above.









▲ Notice there's none of the irritating 'blurring' which affects Nintendo 64 games.



▲ Only a machine with the mighty processing power of the Dreamcast is capable of generating such incredible hi-res visuals in real-time.









▲ Figures crossed. It could be a winner.

Camp Mode and Battle Mode. The former affords players the opportunity to choose where they set-up camp, check their army's status, change various set-up parameters, select items, change the system settings, save data and so forth. But it's the Battle Mode where you actually get down to some bloodthirsty killing. Taking place in a fully interactive 3D field, players are able to move freely around the environment, engaging in combat using the items retrieved along the way. This is all viewed from the 'floating' camera which pans and zooms around the battle to give players the best possible view of the action.

MEET THE TEAM

Admittedly it all sounds very 'Japanese', but it's worth mentioning that the team behind The Warring States of Turb boasts some mightily impressive

With stunning real-time hi-res visuals, NEC's first Dreamcast RPG could be a surprise hit.

credentials. The people involved in the planning of the game and design of the characters are the very same people who planned and developed the Tamagotchi. Considering just how many millions sold around the globe, it bodes particularly well for the future of The Warring States of Turb. It's also worth noting that the team has been using the Power VR chip since it began life on the PC. With Dreamcast utilising the second generation of Power VR, the team is putting to use its vast experience to squeeze unparalleled performance out of the Dreamcast.

COMING SOON...

The Warring States of Turb is now looking as though it will be one of the five launch games for the Dreamcast in November, though NEC Home Electronics is only committing itself to a Winter '98 release. Either way, we'll have plenty more details in a forthcoming issue of SSM.



▲ Bare in mind that these screenshots are taken from a very early version of the game.









▲ It's all in Japanese at the moment, so it's a bit difficult to figure out what's going on.

Seventh Cross

Dreamcast Tamagotchi clone exposed! ■ All-new information and screenshots ■ First ever videogame to tap into your subconscious ■ Release to coincide with Japanese Dreamcast launch

Much has been said of Seventh Cross on various Sega Internet fan sites of late, both good and bad, but hard facts on the Dreamcast launch game have remained pretty scarce - until now. SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE's Japanese Editor , Warren Harrod, has worked tirelessly to secure these exclusive screenshots and information on one of the few known Japanese launch titles. What you see before you are the fruits of his hard labour. Yet these revelations barely scratch the surface of what we have planned for the next few issues - with many more Dreamcast exclusives guaranteed in forthcoming issues!

MEET THE FAMILY

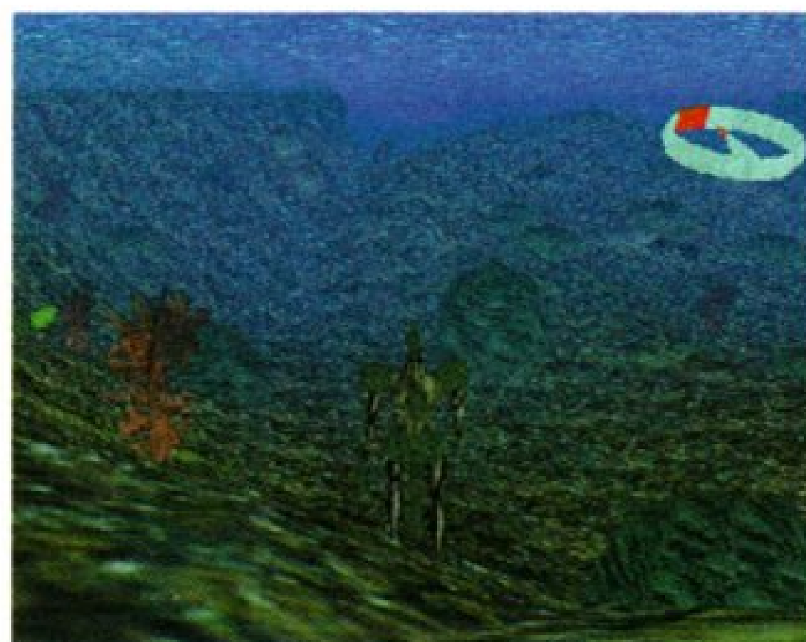
The programmers at NEC Home Electronics have created over 810,000 different lifeforms to evolve into. Here are just a few:



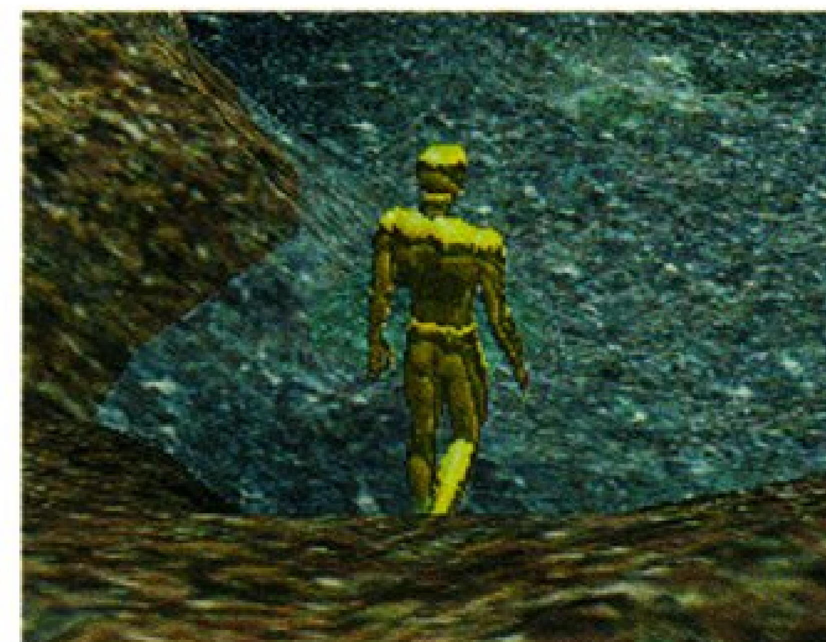
MY BRAIN HURTS

The concept behind Seventh Cross is similar to that of the Tamagotchi, albeit a more challenging and complex version. The basic idea is to create and evolve your very own lifeform to compete against others and become a supreme being. However, the ways and means by which this is achieved are very different indeed.

Players begin by drawing a picture in a 10 x 10 grid using lines and dots in various colours. This is then analysed by the latest in Neurotechnology (developed by the NihonDenki Ltd. Personal C&C Research and Development centre cognition!) to determine what your creature will be like. For example, a picture consisting of many red dots indicates strength, whilst a lot of white dots indicates intelligence. As players are given the opportunity to draw freely, they are not aware of the significance of their picture and thus the lifeform created is an accurate reflection of the player's inner character. Get it?



▲ From the depths of the ocean...



▲ ...to dry land and beyond! Impressive...

SEEK AND DESTROY

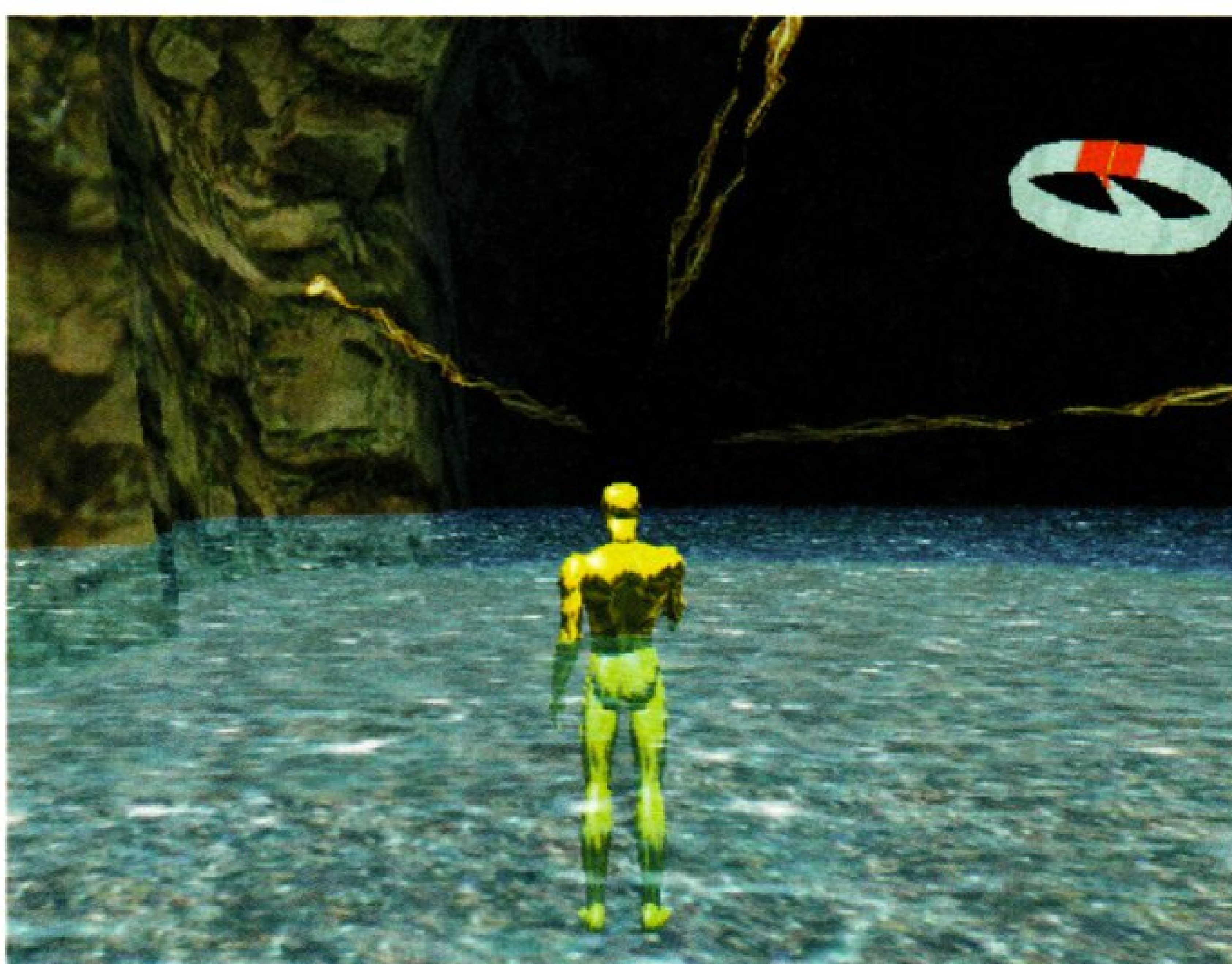
Once you've got your head around that concept, it's plain sailing from here on in. The basic lifeform begins its life at the bottom of the sea and must perform several rudimentary functions before it is able to sprout legs and move onto the land, such as eating, sleeping and fighting. Searching for food to maintain its strength quickly becomes a priority, so it's necessary to widen the creature's search by exploring the vast environment around it. Danger lurks around every corner, with a large variety of predators waiting to swallow you up. Engaging in battle with such creatures is really the only way to progress through the game, with your lifeform gaining in strength as a result of a victorious battle. Only the strongest will survive and progress to higher levels of being.

It appears that NEC is trying to break new ground with innovative and original titles.





▲ The effects are decent enough, but not really what we'd expect from the Dreamcast.



▲ The aim of Seventh Cross is to seek out food to enable your lifeform to evolve.





▲ One of the more primitive lifeforms.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

Once you've secured some food for your lifeform, digesting it benefits your creature in two ways. One is through simple absorption of nutrients like calcium, minerals, vitamins and so forth. The other is by building up components of DNA in order to evolve. When sufficient evolution experience points have been amassed, players are given the opportunity to draw a new picture on the 10 x 10 grid using a palette of six colours. This is then used to determine your DNA pattern, meaning that each player will have their own unique lifeform!

MORE NEWS SOON!

To be perfectly honest, these early screenshots of Seventh Cross fail to do justice to the awesome power of the Dreamcast. With the likes of Dreamcast Godzilla drawing gasps from those who see it, Seventh Cross is a bit of a come down. But we're expecting NEC Home Electronics to pack a great deal more visual frippery into the title before November. Expect to see a whole lot more of this game over the next few months in SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE.



▲ Seventh Cross is the first videogame ever to tap into the player's subconscious, basing the game character on the true character of the person playing the game. Weird, eh?

DARWIN'S THEORY OF EVOLUTION EXPLAINED

1. Begin the game as a tiny ameoba... 2. ...before evolving into a worm-like creature... 3. ...and finally getting legs... 4. ...to enable it to walk on dry land. Cool.

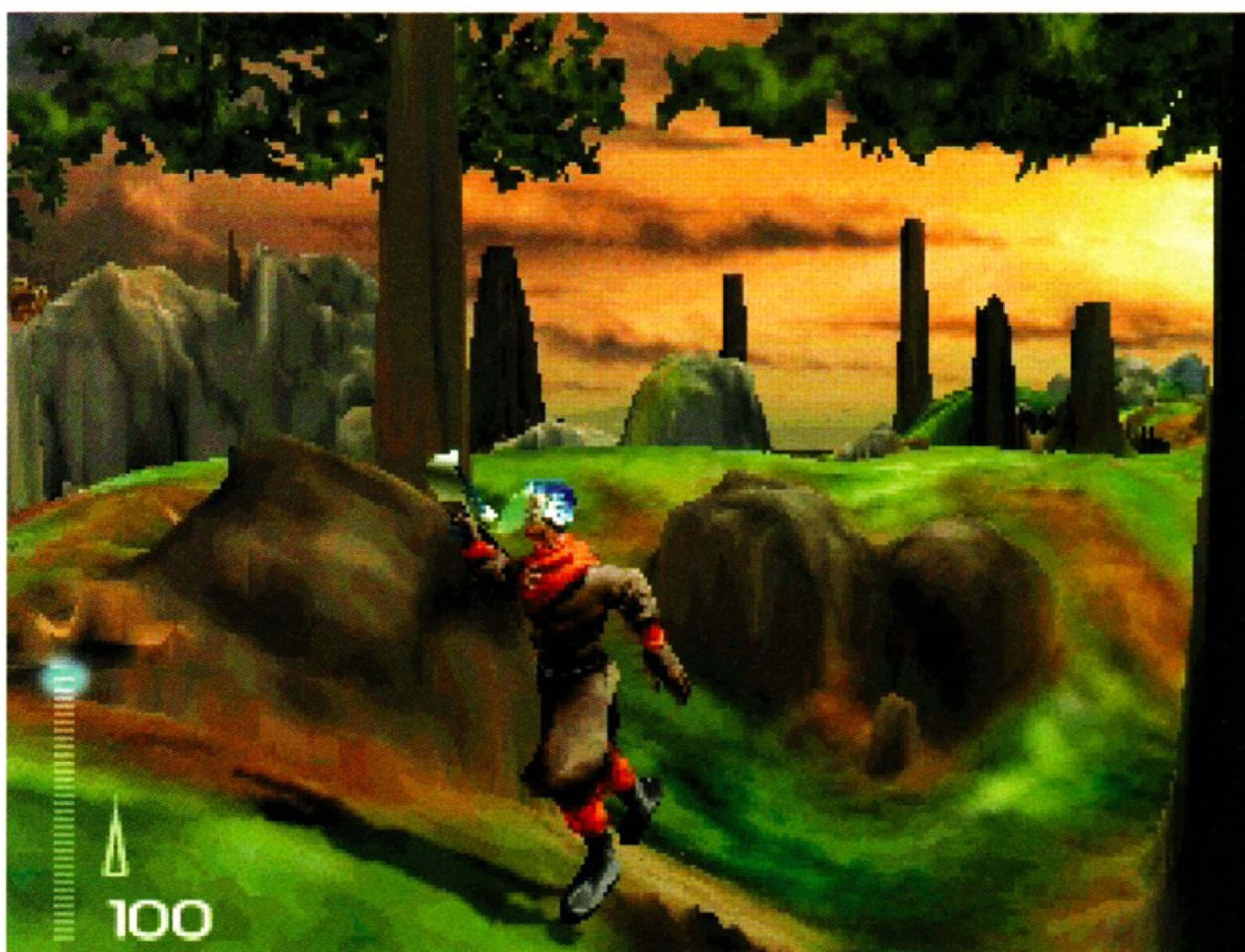








▲ The graphics aren't up to much, but the in-depth Tamagotchi-style of play sounds cool.







Party On!



European Third Parties Sign On!

Barely two months have passed since the announcement for the Japanese launch of the Dreamcast ■ In the Land of the Rising Sun, third parties are still forbidden from announcing any involvement with the new Sega platform ■ However, some European developers have spoken out.



▲ Gremlin's popular Actua Soccer series looks set to receive the 128-bit treatment.

A recent news article in videogames trade paper Computer Trade Weekly (CTW) unearthed a good deal of information on the involvement of Western developers with Sega's powerful new hardware in the lead-up to September's ECTS show at Olympia, West London.

The article also confirmed Sega's own plans for the prestigious event - Europe's only videogames trade exposition. Despite the firm not having a presence in the main hall at Olympia (again), Sega will once again be displaying its wares at a hotel venue just down the road from the main show. Obviously there is going to be little for Sega Europe to exhibit in terms of Saturn wares - only Deep Fear will be unreleased at the time of the show. However, Sega does want to take this opportunity to reveal its "1.5 Party" Dreamcast products - games from Bizarre Creations, No Cliché, Red Lemon, Appaloosa and Argonaut. These games will be on show in demo form behind closed doors - expect SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE to return from ECTS with full detailage of these potentially stunning games. And perhaps some more too...


▲ Can you imagine how realistic this'll look?



▲ Rage Software's PC hit, Incoming, is headed to Dreamcast in time for the Japanese launch.





▲ Actua Golf has been hailed as the most realistic representation of the sport to date.



INFOGRAMES
This European firm recently acquired Manchester's Ocean Software, and has just confirmed Dreamcast development, with a quartet of titles due for release on the super-console. Sequels appear to be the flavour of Infogrames produce with Outcast 2 and Alone in the Dark 4 confirmed as Dreamcast titles. Two other titles are promised - one a racing game (possible V-Rally), the other remaining shrouded in mystery, although it is being developed specifically for the Dreamcast.

EIDOS
The mighty Eidos has confirmed Dreamcast development, with the jewel in its crown, Core Design, announcing the development of FOUR titles for the new platform. The firm also confirmed that three games in the quartet will be multi-format launches (so expect to see them on PC) with the final game being a Dreamcast exclusive.



Despite Core itself being very, very quick to play down rumours of the return of Lara Croft to the Sega stable, the original CTW feature was keen to point out that Sony's console exclusivity license for Lara runs out at the end of 1999, just months after the launch of the Dreamcast. It's all pure conjecture at the moment, but we can only hope.

GREMLIN INTERACTIVE
The stalwart Sheffield developer has also announced plans to bring some of its greatest titles to Dreamcast. At the time of writing, games destined to appear on the new Sega machine include future, more advanced incarnations of its top-selling hits Actua Soccer and Actua Golf. One can only hope that Gremlin add its other major franchise player, Premier Manager, to the equation - the lack of a decent footie management game was just about the only major genre that the Saturn failed to deliver with.

Expect these stunning European Dreamcast demos to be show at ECTS this September.

Whilst Gremlin enjoyed mixed fortunes on the Saturn, its recent PC wares (just about the only yardstick you can use to measure potential Dreamcast performance) have been met with unanimous rave reviews. Suffice to say, we're quite excited about the possibilities here!

RAGE SOFTWARE
This firm has something of a "hot and cold" history with decent games including Jonah Lomu Rugby and Darklight Conflict rubbing shoulders with some complete dogs (the unforgivable Saturn Doom). Regardless, its announcement that it's developing for the Dreamcast launch is still welcome.

Rage is actually busy coding for the Japanese launch of the Sega super-console. A conversion of its popular PC title, Incoming, is due to hit the Dreamcast on November 20. Sega of Japan was obviously impressed with the quality graphics of Rage's effort, which it has to be said looks spectacular. Gameplay? Well, Incoming has been described as a "'90s Space Invaders", although it has to be said that the gameplay is fairly limited.



▲ Infogrames has revealed that Outcast 2 will be available for the Dreamcast next year.



▲ The future certainly looks promising...



▲ ...with a wide range of titles available.

D2 Special Report!

More images from Warp's first Dreamcast game! ■ More action from Laura Parton's latest and perhaps greatest adventure! ■ First person perspective shooting action now revealed!



▲ These exclusive new shots show some of the detail contained within D2's backgrounds.



▲ Warp has now added transportation...



▲ ...as well as a few new locations.

Kenji Eno's company, Warp, is working at top speed to have D2 ready for its Winter '98 release date in Japan. The firm has recently released all-new screenshots designed to show off some of the game's new features and it's looking most impressive now.

At the D2 Show in May, Kenji Eno showed off an early version of the software and to be honest, it was very difficult to judge exactly what the finished game would offer. One point Eno-San has been emphasising recently is that D2 will have little - or nothing - in common with the game that it perhaps most resembles, Tomb Raider 2.

From a cursory glance of the software, the comparison perhaps seems valid, but now that the project is gaining momentum, it's clear to see that D2 is a completely different kettle of fish. Just about the only thing that is similar - the viewpoint - is not as fixed as it is in the adventures of Lara Croft. These new screenshots show the first person perspective action as Laura brandishes her uzi against an incoming creature that leaps from the roof of a Canadian cabin. The screenshots on this page show you that D2's main protagonists now feature a level of detail second-to-none.



▲ Just remember: this is no Tomb Raider!



However, Tomb Raider is essentially a puzzle game with a bit of action and leaping about. It's also based around a sequential series of levels - which is almost the complete opposite of what D2 is all about. This is one huge, coherent worldscape where all the action takes place. You can't really get much more different than that can you? Oh, and for anyone moaning about Laura Parton being Lara Croft inspired er... D (starring

SHE'S AN UZI LOVER

You've already seen the screenshots of the svelte-looking Laura running around in the snow and ice with nothing but an uzi sub-machine gun for company. Well, now with the aid of Warp's new screenshots, you too can see how Ms Parton makes use of the military firepower at her disposal as she guns down one of the hideous mutant creatures populating D2's world of snow and ice. Gory, eh?





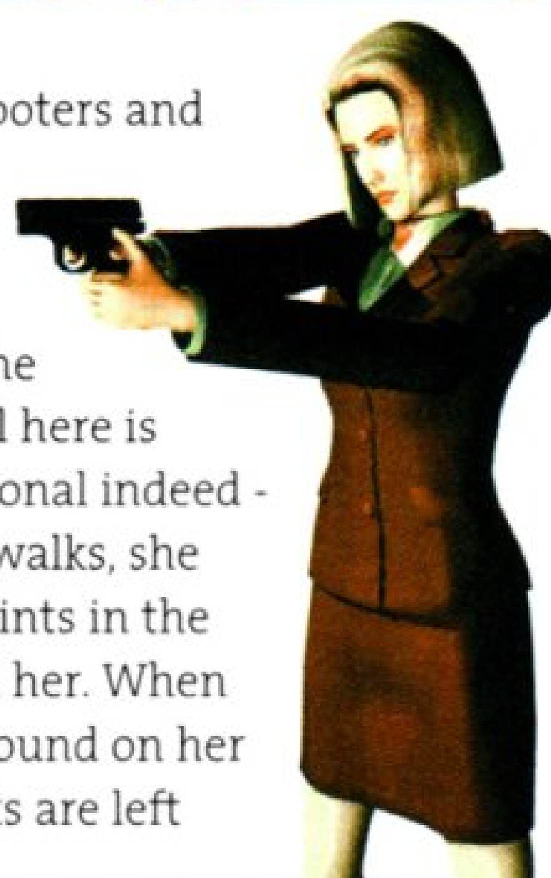




Laura) came out on the Saturn ages before Core's Tomb Raider! Let that be an end to this 'debate'.

GETTING ABOUT

The other main talking point of the newly released D2 materials concerns the freedom of movement around the icy terrain. Yes, you can walk around should you so desire, but the landscape is so vast that Laura would be better advised to make use of the various snow-scooters and cable cars dotted around the landscape. The level of detail here is most exceptional indeed - when Laura walks, she leaves footprints in the snow behind her. When she drives around on her scooter, tracks are left behind the vehicle in the snow.



FROM DAY TO NIGHT

Dreamcast's phenomenal lighting capabilities have been put to great use in D2. The new screenshots show the various stages of day-time, from the brightness of a new dawn to the eerie darkness of dusk. Everything is calculated in real-time using the immensely powerful PowerVR 3D technology and it all looks a treat.

WHAT NEXT?

Warp is one of the most proactive software developers in Japan - a surprise since the team is relatively small - around the size of the Bizarre Creations team currently producing the Dreamcast game codenamed Metropolis, for Sega Europe. Expect to see a lot, lot more of D2 in the months to come in SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE!



▲ She may look like a librarian, but Laura is one tough gal – she also packs a pistol!



▲ Use vehicles to travel around levels.

CD-2

CD too, geddit? No? Ah, forget it. Anyway, remember when we told you about Kenji Eno's prodigious piano-playing at the D2 Premier Show in May? Well Eno-San has made good on his promises and released his 'Sketches' music CD in the Land of the Rising Sun. Unfortunately, it's not actually going to be made available over here since Eno-fever isn't quite what it is in Japan, but this hauntingly classic rendition of the new game's soundtrack would make a popular bonus to the official European versions of D2. However, if you're desperate to get hold of the Sketches CD, give your local importer a call.





SNK Exclusive Interview

Following last month's surprise news, SNK's Mr Norimasa Hirano chats EXCLUSIVELY to SSM about the forthcoming Neo Geo Pocket launch, arcade conversions and what the future holds. WARREN HARROD reports.



SNK's Mr Norimasa Hirano is certainly excited about his company's future developments. So are we. The Neo Pocket could be bigger than the Game Boy!

SSM When did you start development of the Neo Geo Pocket?
NH We started planning in summer of 1997, but development started for real at the beginning of this year.

SSM Why did you decide to create the Neo Geo Pocket?
NH Up to now, the Neo Geo has been mainly for what you could call a 'core users' machine. From now on we want to widen the appeal of Neo Geo to a wider range of gamers.

SSM Does this mean you'll be creating Neo Geo Pocket titles other than King of Fighters?
NH Yes. We are considering all sorts of games such as sports simulations and RPGs.

SSM Other than SNK are there any other third party companies creating games for the Neo Geo Pocket?
NH I can't reveal the names yet, but there are third party companies creating games for the Neo Geo Pocket.

SSM How many games are you planning to release at the same time as the Neo Geo Pocket?
NH We hope to have about seven or eight titles for its release, but by the end of the year our target is to have around 15 titles out. This includes third party games as well.





▲ Real Bout 2: An arcade smash, but will it ever arrive on Sega Saturn?



SSM How many units are you expecting to sell?
NH By the end of the year we hope to sell about 300,000 units in Japan. Then, from October this year until September '99 we're expecting to sell around one million units in total. We're going to put a lot of effort into marketing the Neo Geo Pocket in Japan.

SSM What about overseas sales?
NH We haven't decided yet whether we'll release the Neo Geo Pocket simultaneously in Japan and the rest of the world. The



▲ If you haven't checked out Real Bout 2 yet, get down your local arcade now!



▲ Will SNK be developing 2D fighting games for Dreamcast? It's staying quiet for now...



▲ Metal Slug 2: A great shoot 'em up sequel and possibly SNK's finest hour.



▲ There are few companies with a fine 2D pedigree – SNK is one of them.





▲ Metal Slug's amazing animation and tongue-in-cheek action proved to be a real hit with Saturn owners.

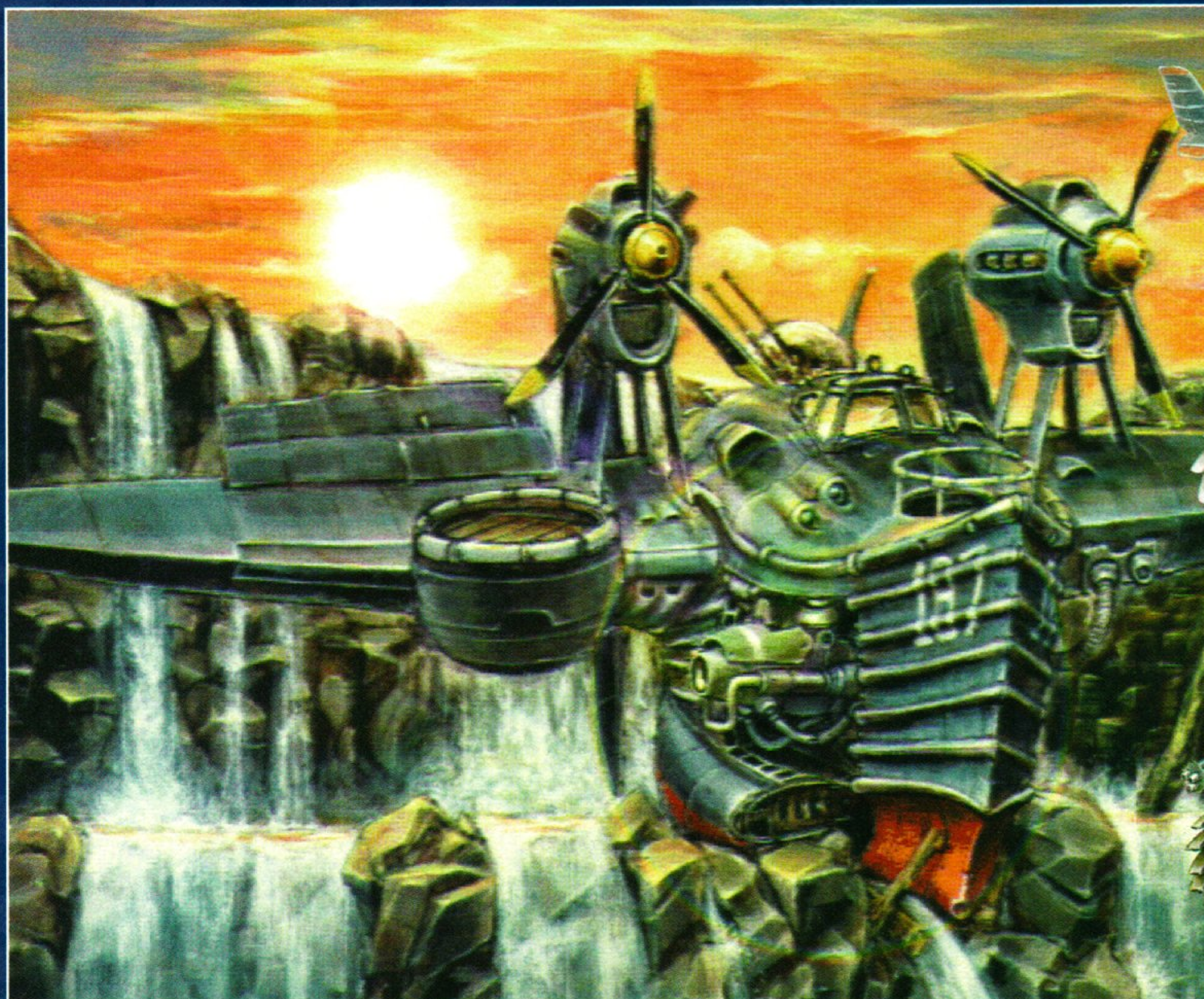
foreign release may be a little behind the Japanese release.

SSM Will you release the same titles both in Japan and abroad?
NH It depends on a case by case basis. For example, fighting games, sports games and RPGs will be sold both in Japan and overseas. However, Japanese specific titles, like Mahjong, will only be available in Japan. There will also be specific games that will only be created and released for the foreign market as well.

SSM Do you consider the new colour Game Boy a serious rival?
NH It certainly has a large market share, but the Neo Geo Pocket's target audience is slightly different to the Game Boy's. First, we released the Neo Geo as a cartridge system. It was expensive, but hardcore gamers who liked beat 'em ups bought it. However, it was costly so we made the Neo Geo CD which was more affordable. By porting titles to the PlayStation and Saturn we were further able to appeal to the general gamer. First we get the core user and then we move on to the more general gamer. At some point in the future we will compete against the Game Boy, but at the moment it doesn't have any influence on the Neo Geo Pocket.

SSM Will you be creating a wide range of accessories for the Neo Geo Pocket?
NH At the moment all of our add-ons are in the planning stage. There will be a two-player link-up cable, but we can't say for definite what else we'll be producing.

>>









▲ Metal Slug art: SNK's artists are easily on a par with Capcom's legendary doodlers.





▲ Samurai Shodown 64: Powered by the Hyper Neo Geo board.



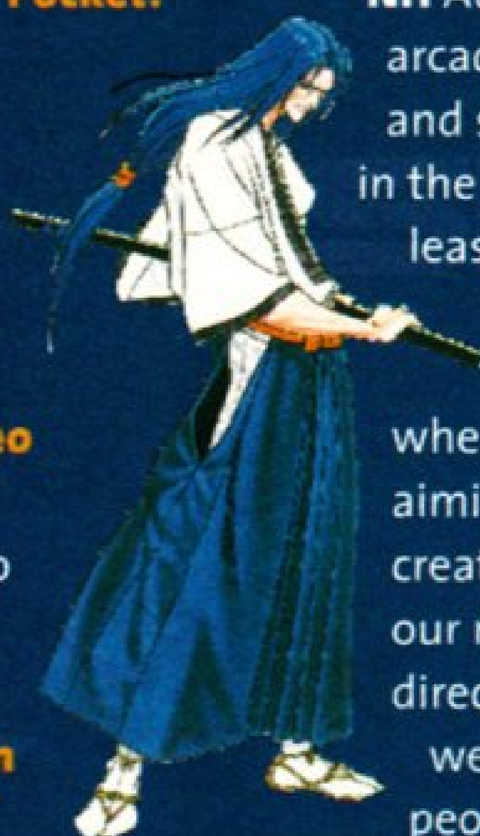
▲ A Saturn version is possible, but SNK is adopting a 'Wait and See' policy.



SSM When will we be able to see the design of the Neo Geo Pocket?
NH We're currently in the middle of development for the hardware system. Although the general shape has been fixed, the final design for the case hasn't been decided yet. We'll probably announce what it will look like sometime before the Tokyo Game Show in October.

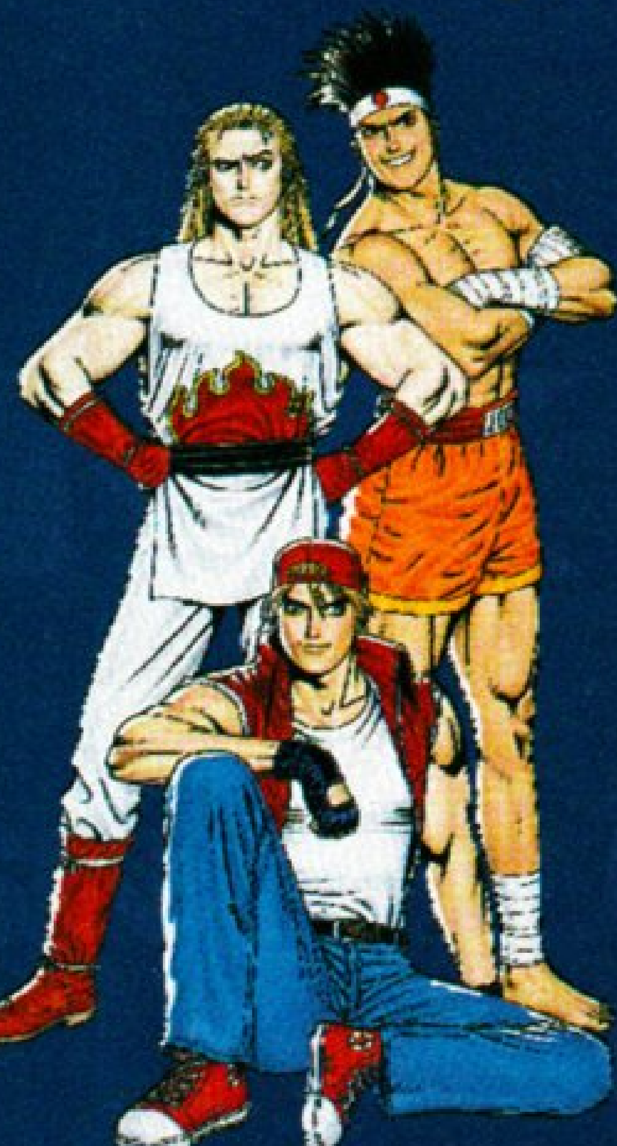
SSM Will you have lots of different colour versions of the Neo Geo Pocket like the Game Boy?
NH Yes, we're certainly considering having lots of colours to choose from.

SSM Can you tell us how SNK will develop as a company in the future?

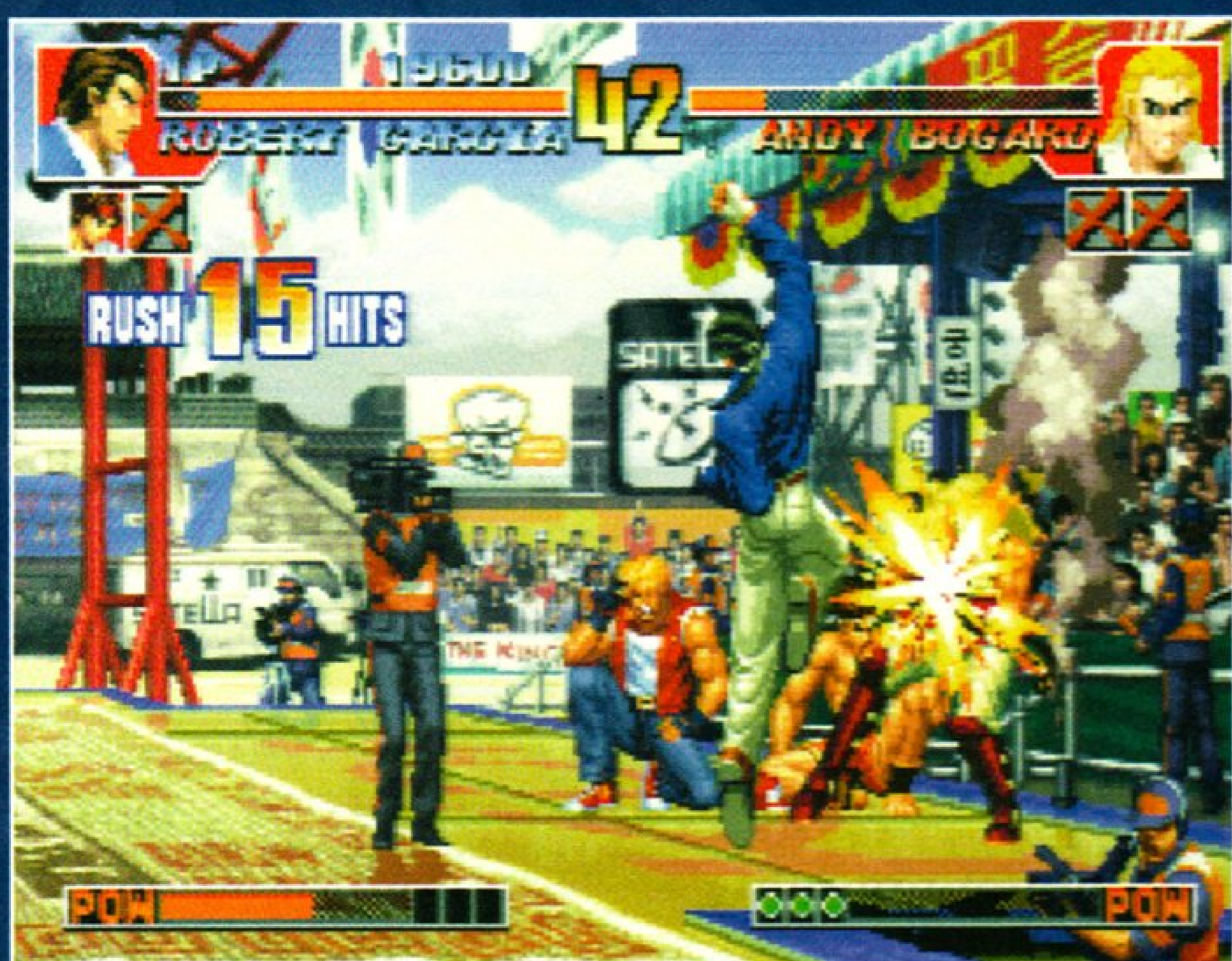


NH At this point there are three directions for SNK. One is the arcade market. Up to now we've been using 16-bit hardware and software, but last year we moved up to 64-bit. We're still in the process of experimenting with the technology, but at least we've had a go at it. For SNK, it was our first attempt at building a dedicated cabinet for Road's Edge, which was our first driving game. We're still at an early stage when it comes to developing coin-ops like this, but we're aiming to become more like Sega, Namco and Konami by creating more dedicated cabinet games. We want to increase our market share both at home and abroad. The next direction for us is the Family Entertainment Centre. In Japan, we have several Neo Geo World amusement parks where people can play not just video games, but also billiards and









▲ King of Fighters '98: SNK is back on top form with this awesome arcade smash!



▲ Are you listening SNK? We demand a 3D version of King of Fighters on Dreamcast!

bowling as well. The third and final direction is consumer, and this is the most difficult area for us. With the Neo Geo Pocket we want to expand out from the standard core users and widen our market to the general gamers.

SSM Since you've already ported Metal Slug to the Saturn, shouldn't Metal Slug 2 be an easy conversion?

NH Although the graphics engine is the same, the amount of data is much larger. We've certainly improved the game considerably. As it is, when you fight boss characters, the graphics would slow down considerably. So we would want to avoid this as much as possible.



SSM Are you planning to produce an RPG?

NH There is an image that SNK equals fighting and that fighting equals SNK. However, we aren't specifically a fighting game company. We've already made a driving game and we're trying various new things as well.

SSM Whatever happened to the team that produced Samurai Spirits RPG?

NH At the time, we tried for the first time to create an SNK RPG. It was also our first attempt at an original home title. In this respect our objective was more than just sales. The know-how that we gained from this project is now being applied by to new products.



▲ SNK has always been a strong supporter of Sega's home consoles.



◀ King of Fighters '98 is currently available on import and is one of the finest 2D beat 'em ups doing the rounds.



▲ And King of Fighters '99? Be patient, it's undoubtedly on its way...





▲ (Left) Sega's VMS is out now, but the Neo Pocket won't be shown until the TGS. (Right) Game Boy King of Fighters.


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DAYTONA USA 2 BATTLE ON THE EDGE

Once again, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE is proud to present yet another indepth interview with the creative geniuses at Sega. This issue, we're in the fast lane with Daytona USA 2. WARREN HARROD reports.

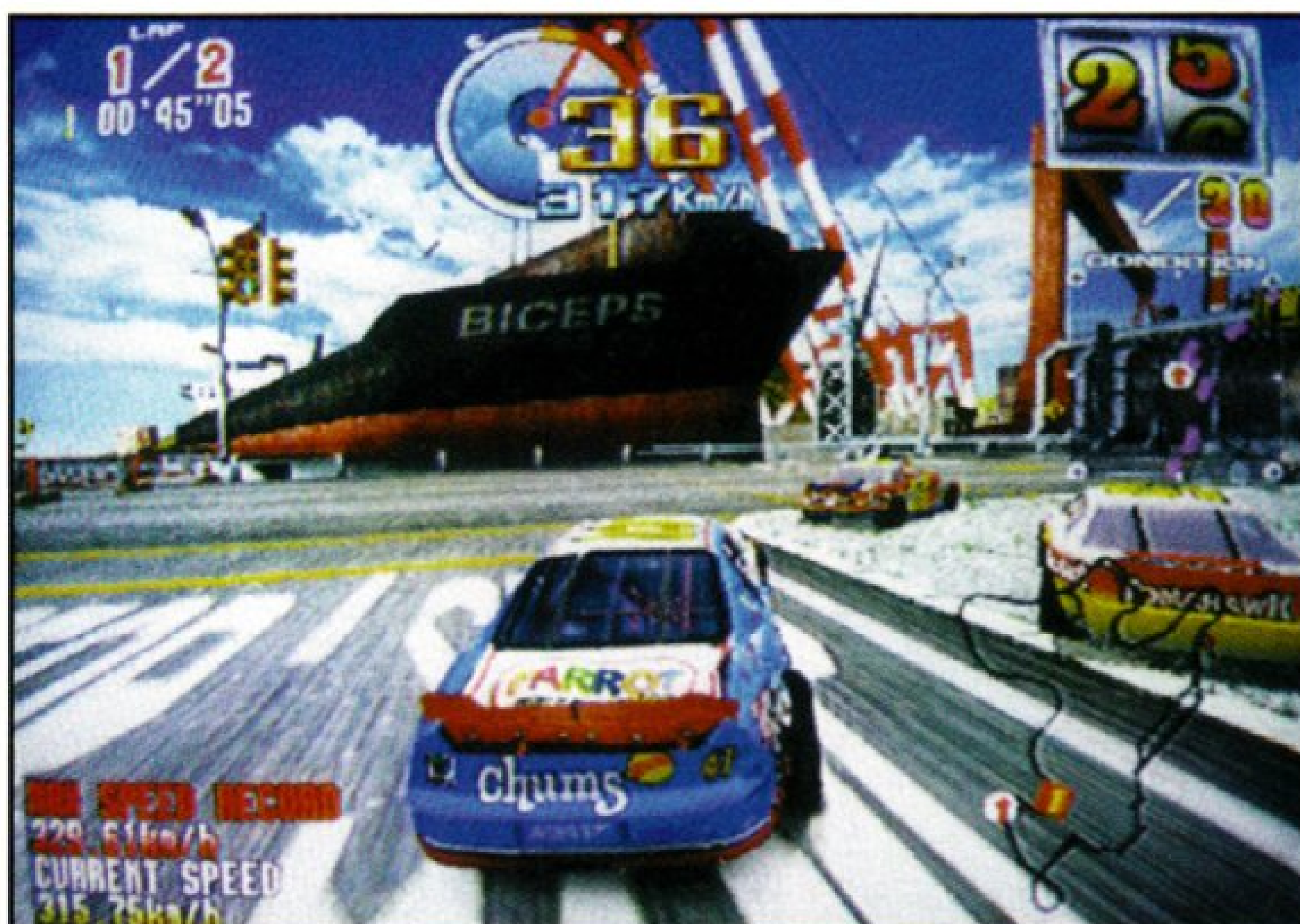
When Daytona USA was released four years ago, it was an arcade sensation, setting the standard for driving games. With stunning graphics and superlative gameplay, it was an instant hit that no other coin-op racer has even come close to equalling. Now, with the power of the Model 3 Step 2 board at their fingertips, AM2's elite developers have produced a sequel that actually surpasses the original. SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE had the opportunity to speak EXCLUSIVELY with Daytona USA 2's Director, Makoto Osaki, and he revealed the reality behind the team's racing legend.



SSM Were the creative teams the same for both Daytona games, and if so, how did this affect the game's development?

MO I worked on both the original Daytona and Scud Race as did a few others. In all there are about half a dozen core members, including two programmers and two designers who have remained the same. The others came from the Virtua Fighter 3 team. Most of them didn't have any knowledge of driving games, so yes, there were a few problems. One case in point is that they didn't know what made a good circuit. For example, on a beginner course you can't start off with a sharp corner - you have to have a gentle curve. They weren't familiar with this type of thinking, so we had to teach them the basics of driving games. However, although they didn't know much about driving games, they had a lot of experience in motion design. In all our race games up to now, such as Scud Race and Daytona, there haven't been any people - just cars and the course. However, the VF3 team and their motion knowledge allowed us to put numerous animals and people into the game. For example, all the motion in the pit crew scene was done by just one VF3 person, all by hand.





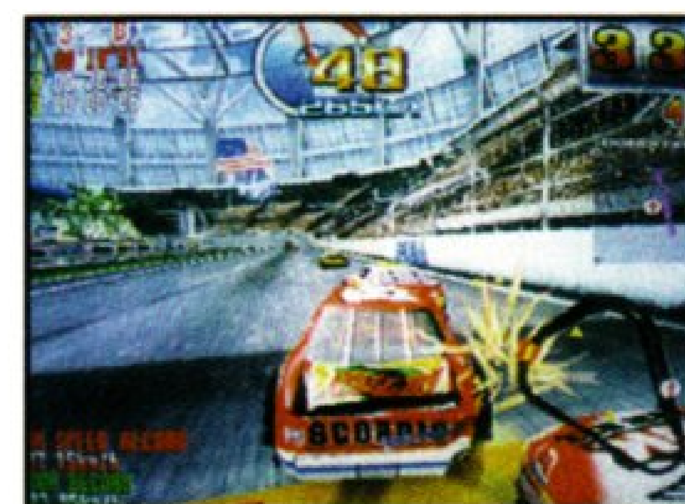
SSM How did you go about designing the cars?

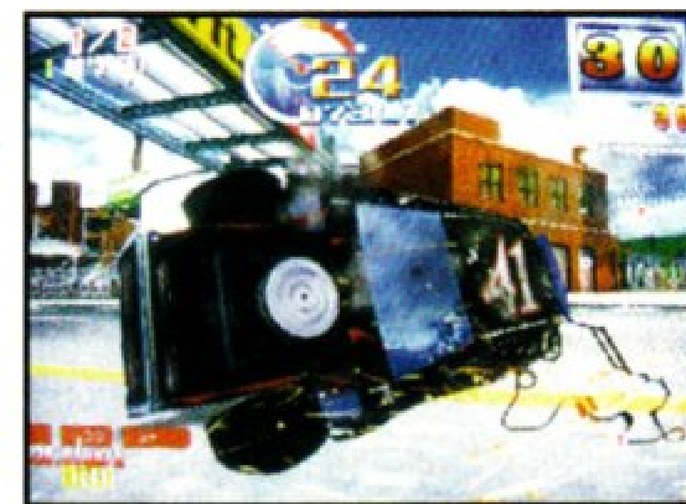
MO There are only three basic NASCAR cars: the Chevy Monte Carlo, the Ford Thunderbird and the Pontiac Grand Prix. Our cars are very similar, but since we couldn't copy them we just took their best points.

The car size specifications are fixed, so we used the kind of information available in specialist motoring magazines and books. We didn't receive any data from the car makers. The first car we designed was the normal one. Then we changed the easy car to make it look more 'driver-friendly' and then the expert car to make it look more 'racey'. There are another two variations for the enemy cars. For the sponsorship stickers we looked at the real NASCAR decals, but obviously we weren't allowed to use them so we had to create false ones that looked real. They don't tend to use pastel colours in America, they like strong vivid images such as red and black. We basically created our own stickers with a distinctive look.

SSM How many polygons did you use for each car?

MO When we started development, we knew roughly how many polygons we had available for each part of the program. Then the designers decided how many polygons to use for each car. Of course the player's car has far more polygons than the enemy cars but it's closer to >>







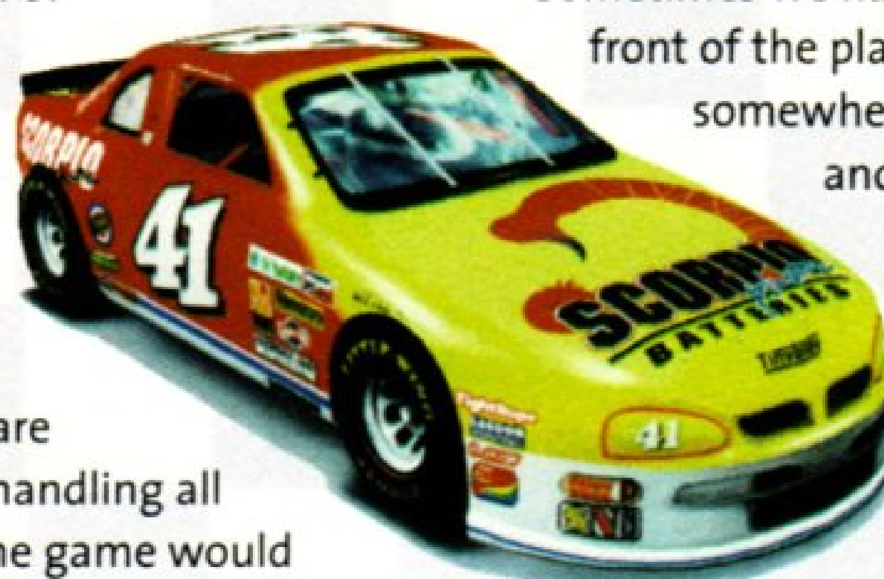


▲ Director Makoto Osaki takes time out to talk to Sega Saturn Magazine.

>> the screen so you need to be able to see detail. There are too many enemy cars to give them all a lot of polygons. Overall, the cars in Daytona 2 have five times the number of polygons that the original Daytona had. We didn't use any of the Daytona USA data as a reference for this game. We started from scratch and redesigned everything.

SSM What's the biggest challenge with having forty cars racing around the track at the same time?

MO Well, the game's program has to control all of them including all of their crashes, but this time each car has a damage parameter as well. If it exceeds this by a certain level then it has to retire. With this much data to handle, the CPU is being made to work very hard. Obviously the cars you can't see don't require as much computation as the cars that are close to your vehicle. However, the CPU is still handling all the cars all of them time. It has to otherwise the game would become a little strange!

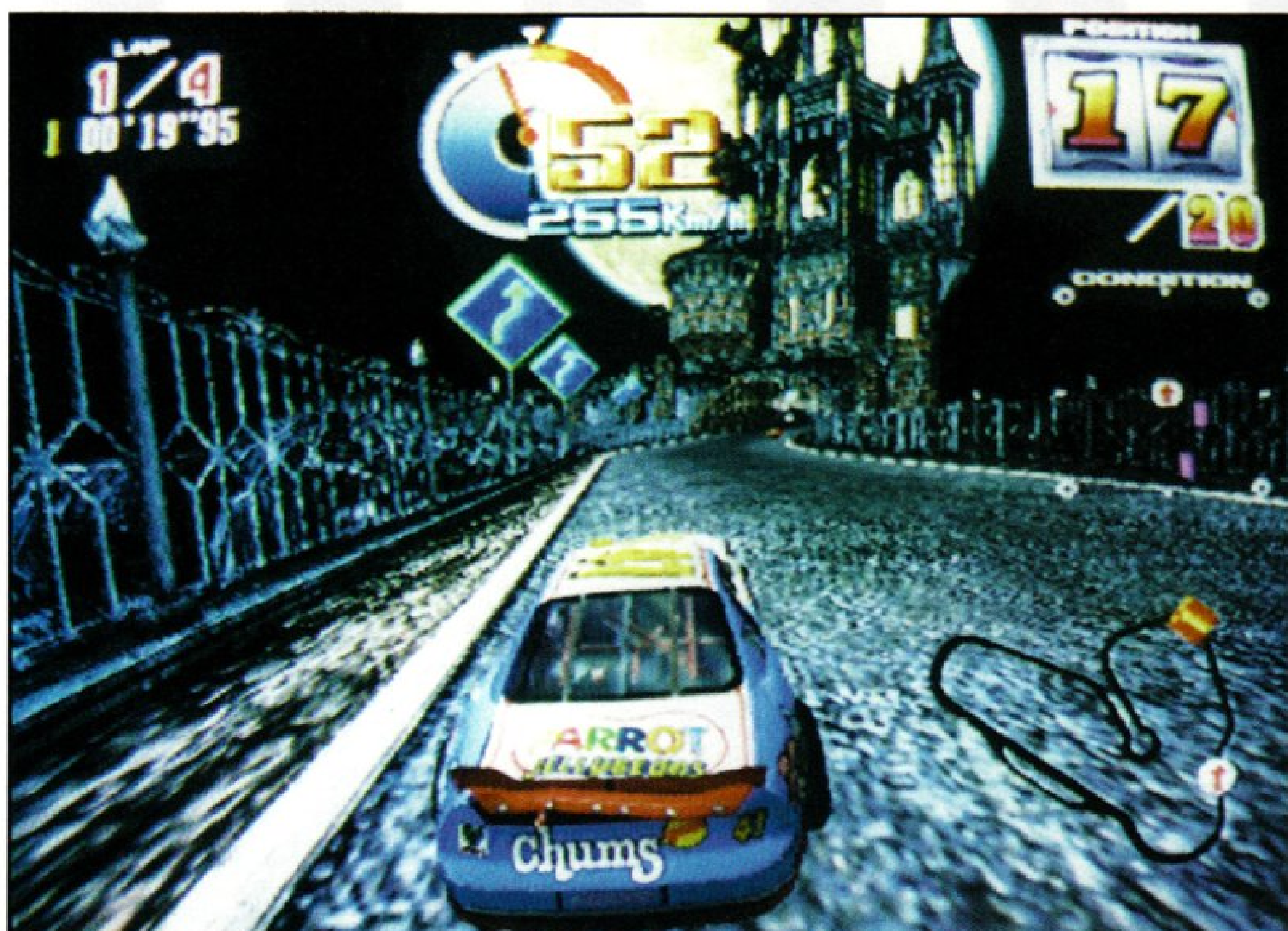


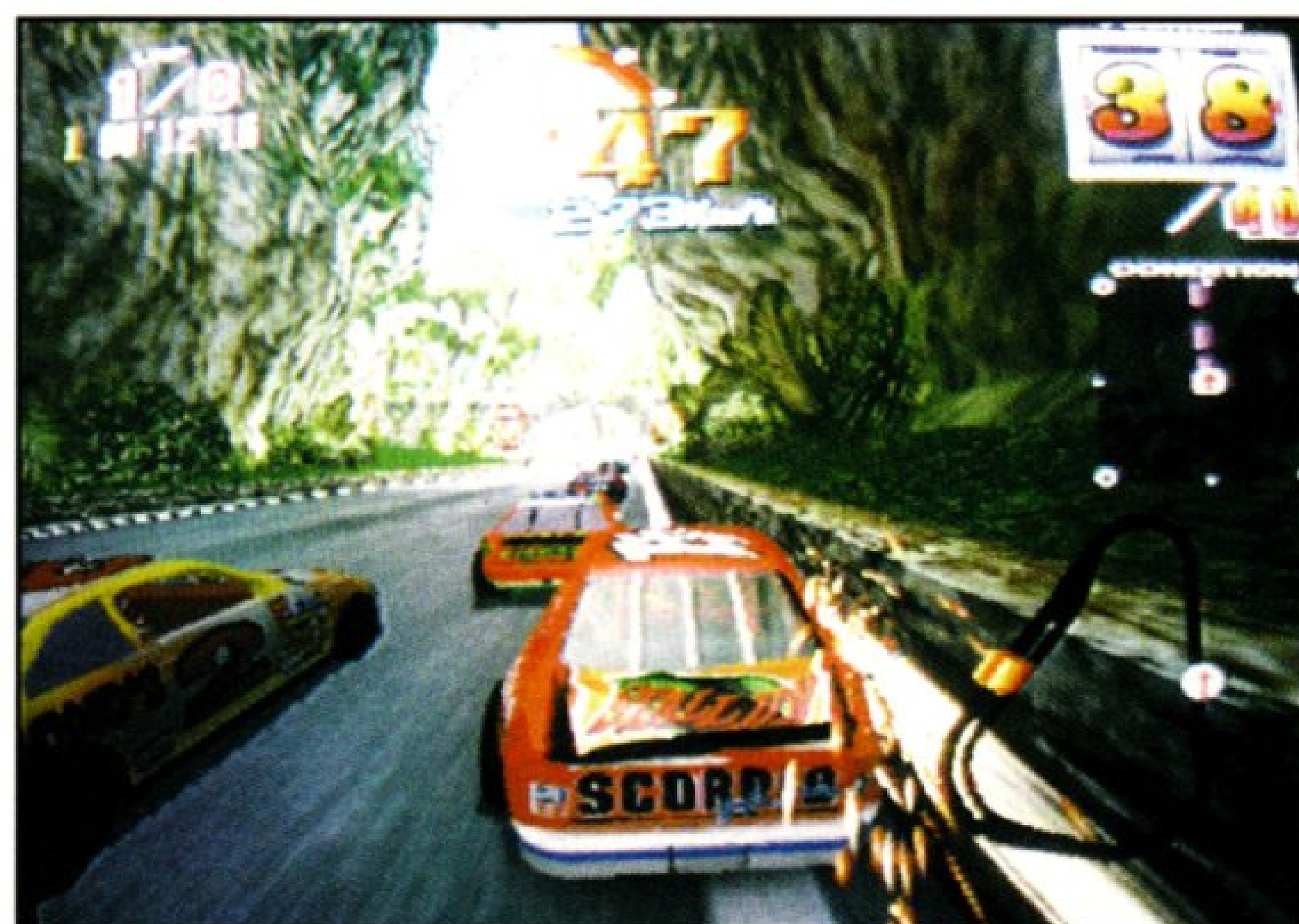
SSM During a typical game, how many times would the enemy cars crash or be forced to retire?

MO It's not fixed, it depends on the player. If the player is aggressive and smashes into a lot of other cars then their hit points will be reduced faster. However, if the player is gentle, it's going to be difficult to make cars retire so we also have a random factor as well. Sometimes we have to be bold and make a crash happen right in front of the player. The reason for this is that if it happened somewhere else on the course then the player wouldn't see it and it would be boring. It doesn't happen very often, but it makes the game more interesting. If you want to send your own car somersaulting into the air then the best way is to crash into the circuit wall. However, you need a sharp angle to achieve this - hitting side-on won't do it. In addition, you need to be travelling at over 280kmh. Anything less than that and you'll just damage the body work. In fact there are six crash patterns in Daytona USA 2 which depend on your speed and impact angle.

SSM Are the cars' AI the same as in the original Daytona?

MO We really had to improve the intelligence of the cars. Unfortunately, we didn't have an opportunity to do it for Scud Race, but Daytona 2 was a different story. For example, in a real race, when you tail-slide around a corner, there's the danger that another car will slam into your side and send you into a spin, but we can't allow that in this game. If you crash into the car in front of you then it's your fault. You can see it coming, but if you're hit for no reason from





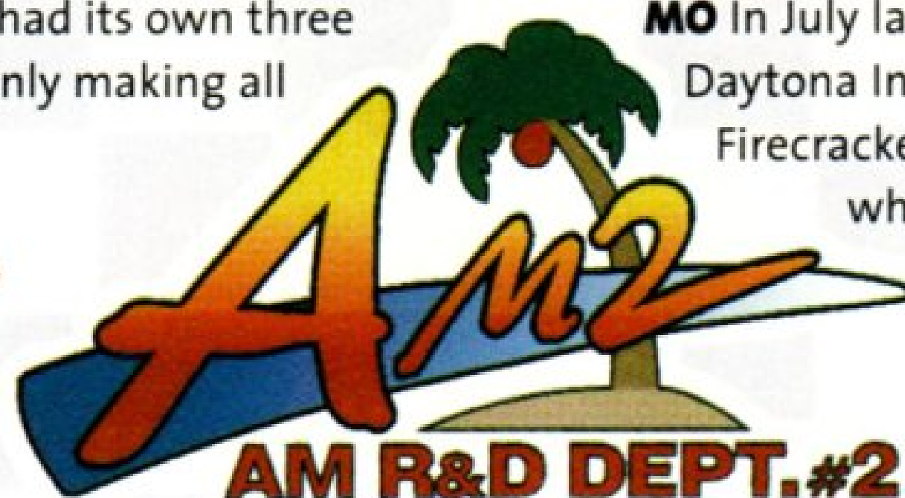




the side then it builds up the player's stress. Achieving all of this was very hard because we had to change the car's direction and speed to avoid players. Each enemy car actually possesses its own steering wheel, brake and accelerator so they move as if they're actually being driven! In Daytona they didn't do this, but now all the cars' entire motion algorithms are computated precisely so that they don't perform strange driving patterns. If they try to manoeuvre too fast they'll spin out of control. In Daytona, each car had its own three spacial dimensions, so they could end up suddenly making all kinds of strange driving lines.

SSM How many different CG damage patterns are there for the cars' bodywork?

MO I'm glad you asked me this question, because, it's infinite! The reason for this is that all the crashes are calculated properly. The CPU computes where the car is hit, the vector of impact, the speed of the cars and the curve of their driving line. From this we then know how much power the crash generated and thus the amount of damage inflicted. Depending on the amount of damage, the smash pattern is different. In addition, each part of the car has its own damage points so only the hit area is affected. In Daytona, the crashes were just a complete CG pattern change, but in Daytona 2 it's a full simulation. The only difference between the enemy cars and your car is that the enemy cars can have their bonnets, fenders and doors ripped off, but we couldn't let the doors be removed from the user's car because we didn't want the player to be able to see inside the vehicle. This was because we didn't have enough polygons left to represent the inside of the car in detail (laughs)!



SSM The courses are very realistic. Did you go to any real locations in order to research them?

MO In July last year, we went to Orlando, Florida to the Daytona International Speedway to see a race called the Firecracker. Next to that circuit is the Sega Speedway where they have a Daytona USA special set-up. At the event we used a shotgun microphone to record some passing car sounds onto DAT. The intermediate course is a theme park so we went to Disney World and Universal Studios. In particular, we liked the SFX attractions like Star Tours and especially the Terminator 2 ride where you wear 3D glasses. We liked the Jaws ride too. That's one of reasons there's a >>






PALM ROCK VALLEY
Chums
gum
41
31





▲ Only the amazing power of the Model 3 Step 2 board made Daytona USA 2 a reality.

shark at the start of the course!

After Florida we went to a course in North Carolina where we had a racing experience with a professional driver, similar to the Motegi event we held this year. We were driven around the course in stock cars almost as powerful as the real NASCAR ones. We recorded some more car samples from inside the car there as well. Finally, we went to New York where we visited various places like Central Park and looked at all the skyscrapers. We've always wanted to have some really high buildings in Daytona, but the Model 2 spec wasn't capable of it. To tell the truth, someone else at Sega did have an idea to do a New York Grand Prix game, but it didn't come off so I thought we'd do it for Daytona 2 instead.

SSM What were your initial ideas for the courses?

MO First of all, there were two things I definitely wanted in the game - the swinging viking boat and the high-rise buildings. Even before we chose the theme-park as the intermediate course, I really wanted to use the viking boat somewhere in the game, but it would've looked a little out of place on a normal circuit. The tall buildings were fine for the city course, so I didn't have to worry about where to put them. One idea we had, which we couldn't use, was for the Egypt course. I wanted some ancient place with Jiggurats and pyramids, but we had already done something like that in Scud Race with the Mayan zone. I thought that since one was South America and the other was Egypt it would have been okay, but they are both ancient places and are too similar. We couldn't make a game that copies something from another game.



SSM Were you only able to do such great CG in Daytona USA 2 because of the new Model 3 Step 2 board?

MO That's right, you couldn't do this on the Step 1 or Step 1.5 because their pixel fill rate and rendering power is insufficient. The number of polygons is no different, only the number of polygons you can put on top of each other has changed. This means that effects like the smoke, fire and sparks are now all possible. Of course, it's not just the hardware. The Daytona USA team were the first people to use the Model 3 because they performed all the bug tests. Amongst them are some real Model 3 maniacs and they absolutely love everything about the board. Our team has the highest number of Model 3 specialists at Sega. Actually, the Model 3 is very easy to use and we're now completely accustomed to using it.

SSM Are there any special hidden features in the game you can tell us about?

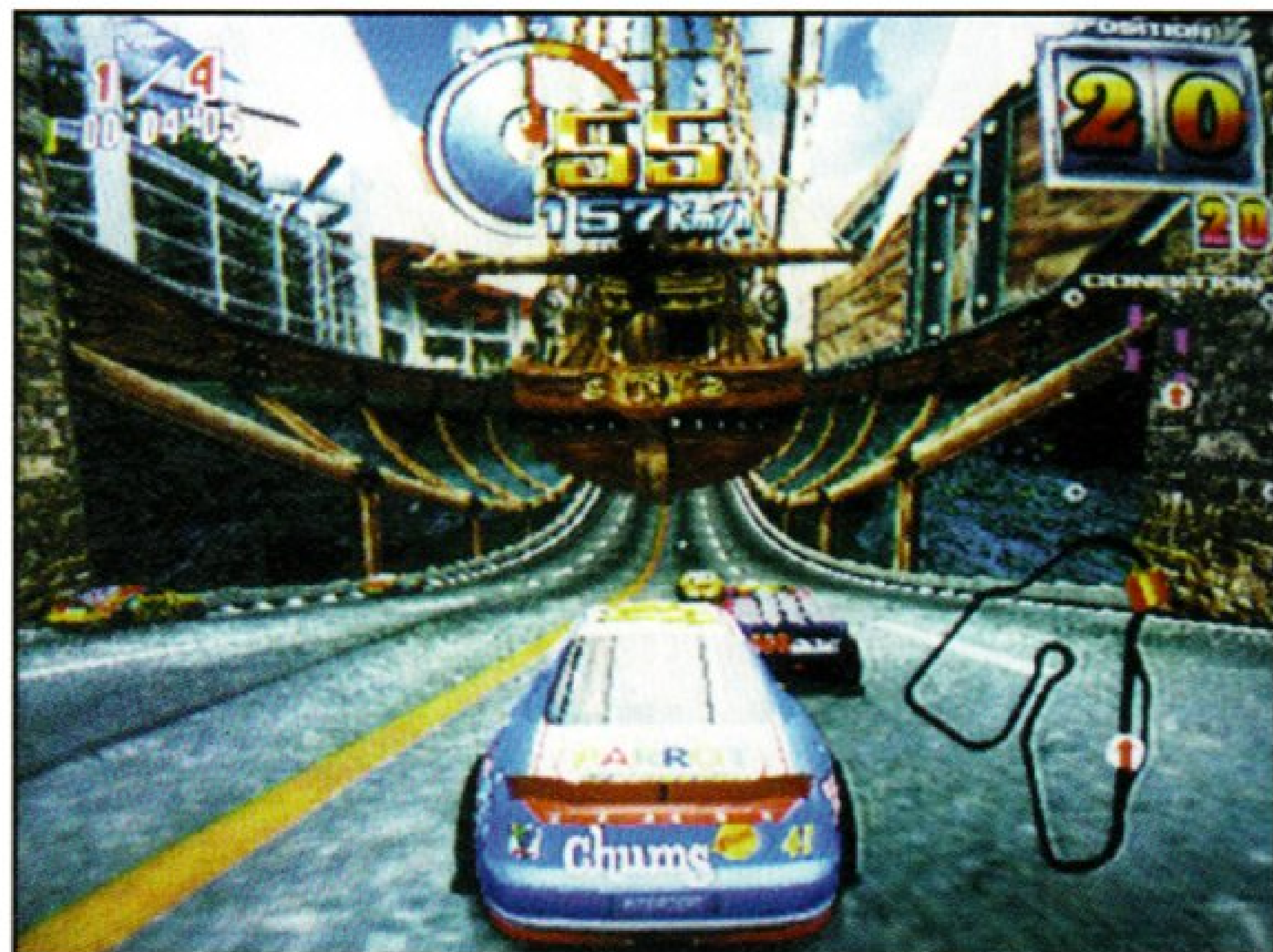
MO I can't tell you how to do it just yet, but you can play the game both in Reverse Mode and Mirror Mode. Reverse Mode is the most interesting because you can see some special features in the scenery that you wouldn't usually see when you drive the right way around. For example, the tunnel mouth leading to the rollercoasters is actually shaped like a giant penguin and Dracula's Castle is replaced by a big pair of evil looking red eyes. You'll enjoy it!



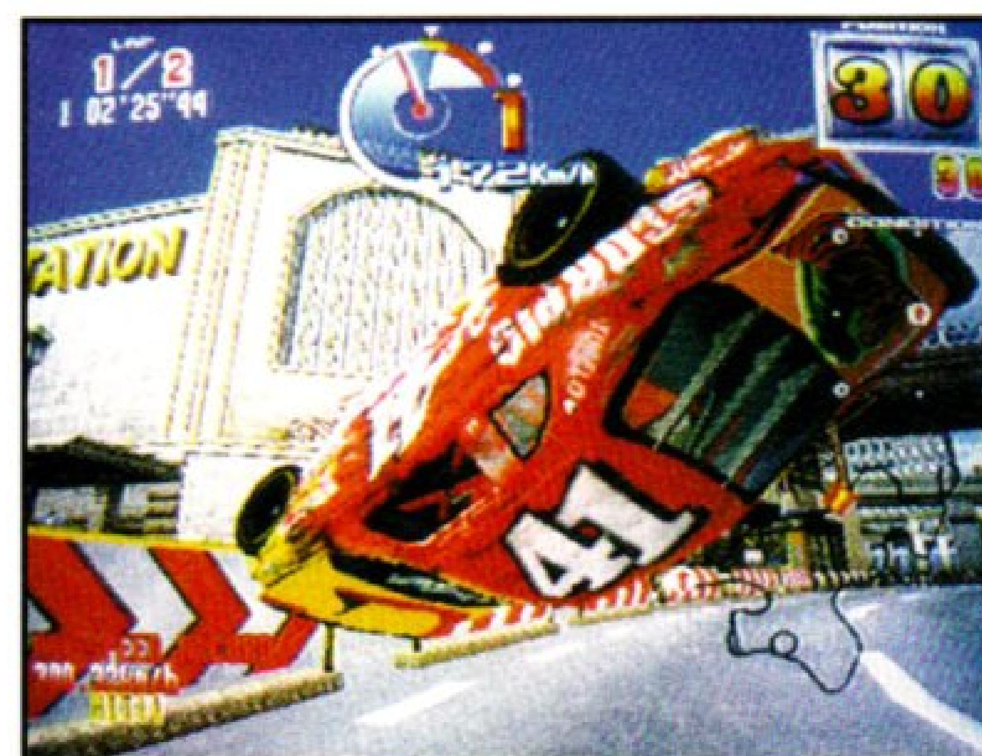
▲ Thanks to AM2 and Mr Makoto Osaki for sparing the time for this interview!

SSM Finally, what do you think sets Daytona 2 apart from other racing games?

MO Crashing into cars is great fun in Daytona 2, so I really recommend that you play using the link-up. Fighting your friends on the race track is really enjoyable. You should also try using the drift and power slides as these are the keys to mastering the race and getting a fast time. Finally, try playing with all the cars. The easy car may seem simple, but getting first place with it is hard!! We really hope you'll be able to keep enjoying Daytona 2 for a long time!







BY	PSIKYO/ATLUS	
RELEASE	OUT NOW	PLAYERS
HARDWARE	PRICE: IMPORT	2
N/A	STYLE: 2D SHOOT 'EM UP	

In Japan, 2D titles are still the tops. With Capcom's beat 'em ups and Konami's Castlevania X selling like hot cakes, newcomer Psikyo hops on the bandwagon with a pretty impressive scrolling shoot 'em up.

Sol Divide



▲ Sol Divide's parallax scrolling backgrounds are stunning.



▲ Even with this many 2D sprites, there's no slowdown.



▲ Psikyo has created a range of weird and cool monsters.

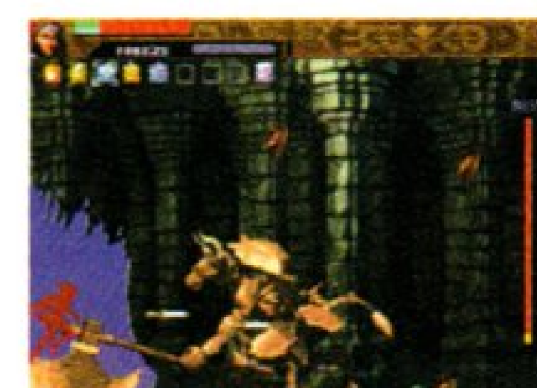


▲ Keep yours eyes peeled for power-ups and magics.

With a flood of quality 2D games hitting the Saturn recently, players are spoilt for choice by the sheer volume of import titles that fall into this category. Fortunately, for those of you lucky enough to own Sega's 32-bit wonder, this is an area where the Saturn excels.

If the name Psikyo rings a bell, it should do. This dedicated Japanese developer has been producing solid console titles for a number of years now, although none of them have ever been picked up for release over here. Regular readers will have encountered Psikyo's work with the 2D beat 'em up, Groove On Fight, as well as the forthcoming coin-op, Fallen Angels. Sol Divide sees the company on familiar ground, with an impressive mix of fast-paced shoot 'em up action and screen-hogging end-of-level bosses. The game immerses players in yer typical fantasy environment, complete with monsters, magic and er... musclebound men with ridiculous hero names like Vorg and Kashon.





▲ It's another impressive Saturn import title, folks.



Selecting either Arcade or Original Modes launches your chosen hero into an epic, side-scrolling battle against the forces of darkness. Gameplay is fast and fluid with multiple on-screen enemies unleashing all manner of energy leaching attacks, before players tackle massive stage guardians. Typical shoot 'em up elements are in full effect as players have basic shots and weapon strikes at their disposal, with more visually impressive magical assaults collected along the way. By blasting creatures, picking up the treasure chests they leave behind and then unlocking these with the correct keys, players soon gain access to graphically staggering powers. And you'll need 'em.

Other items may also be collected, such as potions and health icons, yet some of these often have a negative effect on a player's health. Knowing which icons to pick up and avoid proves almost as troublesome as some of the creatures encountered in



▲ The white guy's the final boss. Unbelievable, but true!





DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

Sol Divide's most impressive feature has to be its amazing animated bosses. Seemingly inspired by the legendary Ray Harryhausen's stop motion monster models, these creations are often so huge that they dwarf players and are actually larger than the screen. We've seen towering end-of-level guardians before, but the fact that these gory giants are subtly animated and move with a speed that belies their bulk is a testament to Psikyo's programming skills. No need for any 4MB cart here... Sol Divide's menagerie shows the power of the Saturn in full effect!







▲ Vorg, Kashon and Tyora. Not, as you might expect, the names of some nasty diseases.





the game's latter stages. Speaking of which, setting the game's difficulty to the easiest (the bizarrely labelled "Monkey"!) and opting for a spot of two player team-up action enables even the most talentless of gamers to blast through to the final end-of-level boss in no time at all. Lee, take note.

Recent 2D scrolling shoot 'em ups have either been retro blasters or space-based battlers, but Sol Divide's fantasy spin actually gives this title a personality of its own. At first glance we were convinced this was just another indecipherable Japanese offering. However, time spent with Sol Divide actually leaves you wanting more of the same. From challenging levels and creatures to a complete lack of slow-down and cool spells, Sol Divide proves its mettle.

Of course, additional levels, playable characters and fully rendered endings wouldn't have gone amiss, but maybe Psikyo could squeeze these features into a Dreamcast sequel? Fingers crossed...



NOW THAT'S MAGIC!

Players begin the game armed with only basic weapons and rapid fire shots. While these skills are certainly sufficient enough to cope with the game's initial battles, later stages require slightly stronger powers. These arrive in the form of some amazing elemental abilities contained within ancient chests. By unlocking these trunks, with the the correct keys of course, players gain the ability to rain various magical attacks down on unsuspecting foes such as fireballs, thunder & lightning, wind and meteors. Additional spells include the fiery phoenix, devastating summons and self-explanatory death attacks.



▲ The freeze spell is particularly effective on bosses.



▲ Death rears its ugly head at the hands of the mighty Vorg. No prizes for guessing what this attack does.





▲ Use magical spells sparingly or on boss creatures.

[Sol Divide mixes classic 2D scrolling shoot 'em up action with cool fantasy elements.]







BY	SEGA	
RELEASE	OUT NOW	PLAYERS
HARDWARE	PRICE	IMPORT	1
N/A	STYLE	2D SHOOT 'EM UP

The latest addition to the popular Sega Ages retro label is a conversion of the 1988 Super Scaler coin-op, Galaxy Force II. But can it still cut the mustard a decade on from its original release?

Galaxy Force II



▲ We'd much rather see a Star Wars Arcade conversion.



▲ A decade on, Galaxy Force Ii is beginning to show its age.

We've quite literally had our senses shattered here at SSM this month with the arrival of Treasure's incredible Saturn conversion of its fantastic shoot 'em up, Radiant Silvergun. Comprising totally addictive gameplay and spectacular high resolution 3D visuals, it's a game that simply must be experienced to be believed. Then of course there's Galaxy Force II...

Alright, so it's a bit unfair to compare the two shoot 'em ups, considering that Galaxy Force II is a decade old now. Way back then they didn't have 3D graphics, not proper ones anyway. No, they had sprite-scaling instead - the process of shrinking and enlarging sprites to create the illusion of objects moving towards and away from the player. As you'd expect, Sega led the way in the use of this technology with its Super Scaler chip set - the Model 3 of its day. This technology enabled Sega's talented R&D departments to spawn a fantastic wave of coin-ops that we've all come to know and love, amongst them the classic Out Run, Afterburner, Thunder Blade, Super Monaco GP and Hang On.



▲ Not the Super Scaler technology at its best.

Of course, they all look a bit crap and dated now, but they were mightily impressive at the time. And that, after all, is the whole point of the Sega Ages label - to bring home the classic coin-ops of yesteryear to all you lucky Saturn owners. The problem is though, Galaxy Force II isn't exactly what you'd refer to as a 'classic coin-op'. Odd that.

> [It may look a bit dated now, but Galaxy Force II was mightily impressive a decade ago.]

The game itself isn't too different from the deluge of blasters around at the time, with the







▲ In a head-to-head situation, we'd unreservedly recommend you pick up a copy of Radiant Silvergun over Galaxy Force II.



▲ There's a distinct lack of variety between missions.



▲ Flying over the surface of Mars... presumably.

same style of 'advance into the screen blasting everything that so much as moves' gameplay. Fair enough. But whilst this provided Afterburner with the white-knuckle thrills 'n' spills that made it such a classic, the action in Galaxy Force II plods along at a frustratingly sedate pace and with unerring predictability. There's little variety between missions to speak of and the action is just plain dull. Technically it's proficient enough for the era (though not a patch on Afterburner) and the difficulty level means that it's no push-over either. But as a shoot 'em up, Galaxy Force lacks the pace and adrenaline-inducing excitement to be a hit.

So is it actually worth tracking down a copy of Galaxy Force II on import? Well, not really. Yes, retro fans will probably go completely gaga for this blaster from the past, but today's gamers want a bit more from their Saturn shooters. Galaxy Force II is not a terrible game by any means and if you're really into your retro titles it could well be an essential purchase. But for those of us just trying to keep our Saturns alive by skimming the cream of the import games, there are far better games to splash your hard-earned cash on.



▲ GF II employs the same lock-on targeting as Afterburner.



▲ Don't be fooled, there are better shoot 'em ups out there.



▲ Nostalgia, eh? It's just not what it used to be.

Five Sega Ages games we'd like to see:

1. Star Wars Arcade
2. Super Monaco GP
3. Hang On
4. Enduro Racer
5. Thunder Blade



▲ Galaxy Force II lacks the pace and excitement to rival AM2's fantastic Afterburner coin-op.

SIT AND SWIVEL



Sega is well noted for its innovative arcade cabinet designs - witness the Afterburner and Lost World coin-ops. Galaxy Force II was no exception, with a rotating hydraulic cabinet ensuring there was always a constant flow of screaming kids waiting to have a go on it. But in all honesty, it was a bit crap really. It's all very well rotating around 320 degrees, but there really should have had some sort of 'tilting' feature to recreate the sensation of your craft banking to the left or right. A missed opportunity methinks.





Virtua Writer™

It's not all hi-tech japery and laughs aplenty here at SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE. Nope. We're having a 'quiet period' at the moment, which means that the most fun we have is gluing £1 coins to the pavement outside in a perverted attempt to get young secretaries to bend over. And even then you end up a quid out of pocket. If you've got any better suggestions on how to pass the time over the coming months, don't hesitate to send them to: VIRTUA WRITER, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, 37-39 Millharbour, Isle of Dogs, London, E14 9TZ or email us at virtua.writer@ecm.emap.com. Our sanity depends on it.

A WAITING GAME...

DEAR SSM

After having read issue #33 of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE from cover to cover, I felt I had to write to yourselves and raise a few points that have not been covered by other readers and I have to get them off my chest.

After the Mega CD, 32X and now the Saturn cock-ups, I personally will not be buying Sega's new machine straight away as I have done with the above. I will be adopting a wait and see policy. And if the PlayStation 2 turns out to be comparable with the Dreamcast in terms of price, quality of games and so on, I will be going for the PlayStation 2.

Alan Winter, Newcastle



Then you'll be waiting a very long time. Conservative estimates are that the PlayStation 2 won't be released in Europe for at least another 2-3 years. By which time you'll be too old to play games. Probably. LEE

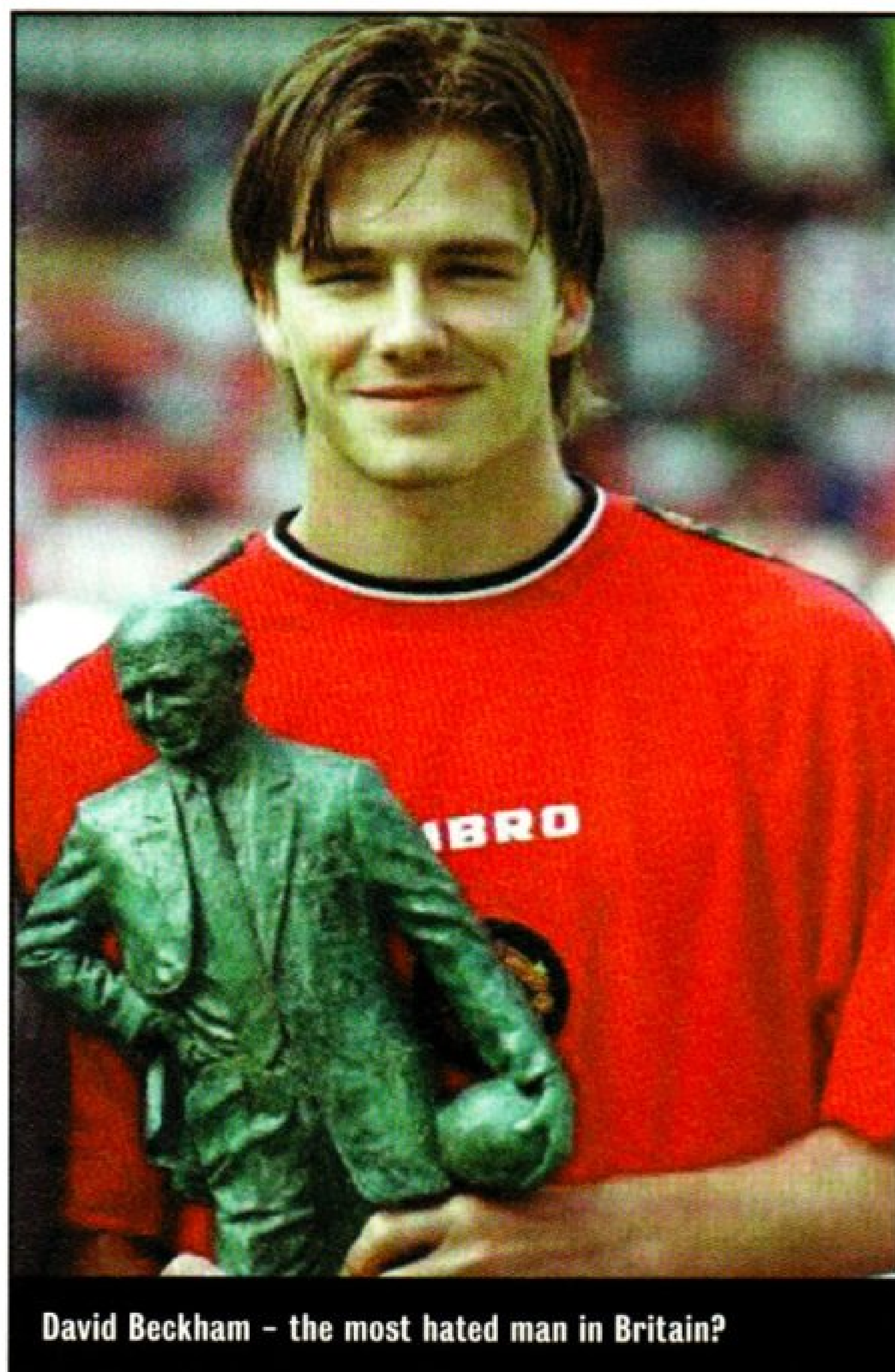
BECKHAM BASHING BEGINS HERE

DEAR SSM

Firstly I'd like to congratulate you fine people at SSM for the fantastic Dreamcast coverage. If it wasn't for you guys continuing to support Sega, I don't know where I would have gone to find out all the juicy bits of information on the wonderful 128-bit machine. I'd also like to take this opportunity to say thanks for your unrelenting support of the Saturn. It may have been overtaken by the PlayStation and N64 (which I also own and purchase mags for), but SSM is by far my most anticipated monthly read. Thirdly, your review of World League Soccer '98 was absolutely spot-on. Even now, weeks after the release of the game, I'm constantly amazed by the PC-like graphics and brilliant gameplay. If anyone doesn't own this game and considers themselves a true gamer, you should be ashamed of yourselves.

On a different note entirely, following David Beckham's abysmal performance against Argentina, may I suggest an alternative career for the talented Manchester United footballer as the latest addition to the ailing Spice Girls pop quartet perhaps?

Alan Ramsey, Southampton



David Beckham – the most hated man in Britain?



Yeah. Waste o' Spice. LEE

England vs Argentina was THE game of the World Cup for me... until 'Becks' cocked it up for all of us. Regardless, we'll be back come Euro 2000, and we're gonna need the boy Beckham, as long as he can hold his temper. RICH



HELP! I'M CRAP AT GAMES!

DEAR SSM

I am very disappointed in your July issue, as I was looking forward to your tips pages, but there was nothing in it on World League Soccer '98. I am looking for some cheats so that I can actually play against the computer, because the programmers have not put any levels of play in there making it impossible to score against the computer, but the computer always scores. I keep getting beaten 8-1, 10-2 and other similar scores. I know what you will say, I am a bad games player, but that's beside the point. I still want to beat the computer, fair or foul.

Mr Livingston, Surrey



How the mighty have fallen. France 3 – 0 Brazil. D'oh!



WLS '98 is probably the most realistic and therefore challenging football game on any console to date. The clever programming chaps have staggered the gameplay in an authentic way, so that the rubbish Premiership teams can be beaten with relatively simple passing games, whereas the more respected teams take a great deal more invention to beat. Unlike more arcade-style football games, you're not going to be able to do this straight away, rather it takes a whole lotta practice and perseverance. But hey, if you're that desperate to win matches "fair or foul", your best bet is to set up a two-player match (and here's the clever bit...), but actually play the game alone. Only a complete idiot would fail to score. Or a rubbish games player. Which you clearly are. LEE

DREAMCAST OR PLAYSTATION 2?

DEAR SSM

I have been buying your mag for a couple of years now (since I got my Saturn) and have recently got hold of issue #33. Having read the pages about Dreamcast and also reading it in GamesMaster, I am starting to get cheesed off! I don't know whether to buy a Dreamcast or PlayStation 2. I'm not against Sega or anything but the Saturn and 32X died such a sad death and the PlayStation is doing really well. I think I might buy a PS2. Please tell me your honest opinion on this situation and don't just say Dreamcast because you work on the official mag.

Matthew Deerier, Lancs



So you want me to tell you if the PlayStation 2, which hasn't been announced yet, no hardware specifications have leaked out and is unlikely to be released for another two years, is better than the Dreamcast? As Rich might say "my crystal ball is a tad murky." Ask us in a couple of years time. LEE

SEGA-PHILES UNITE!

DEAR SSM

Greetings fellow Sega-philes. As you said in your last issue, these are exciting times for Sega enthusiasts, with some excellent Saturn games and all the exciting Dreamcast news filling the pages of your illustrious mag. I personally can't wait for the new system to arrive, but certainly won't be trading my Saturn in for a PlayStation in the mean time, as I suspect many Saturn owners might. No sir. I've managed to resist the pull of Sony's marketing machine and call upon fellow Saturn owners to unite in this cause. The point of this letter is that I was reading your interview last month with Sega's top dog. In there he made a couple of references to PlayStation 2 and how he intends to take the advantage before Sony launch it. Am I to conclude from that statement that Sony is working on a PlayStation 2 console to rival Sega's Dreamcast?

Mark 'Iceman' Powers, Ireland

Your powers of deduction are truly amazing. No really. LEE

UK DREAMCAST MUST HAVE MODEM!

DEAR SSM

The UK Dreamcast MUST come with a modem. It is totally unfair that Sega Europe denies us these things of utmost importance. I have played DeathMatch Quake, and it gives you great pleasure to know that when you kill someone they are kicking themselves at the other end. If the modem

isn't brought to Europe, the OS will be a waste of time, and the PC will have that vital edge over Sega. Also, how do you reach the buttons on the VMS when it is plugged in?

Chris Walker, Scotland



It would be a sad day indeed if Sega Europe decided not to release the Dreamcast modem over here. But it's not like Sega has categorically ruled out the idea or anything, it just hasn't been confirmed as such. We reckon it more than likely will make an appearance in the UK, whether it's bundled with console (as in Japan) or sold as separately as a peripheral. As for the VMS, it's likely to be operable via the control pad once it's plugged in. LEE

Duh! You don't NEED to use the VMS buttons once it has been plugged in... despite its mini- console status, it remains little more than a memory card... albeit one with enormous knobs on. RICH

SEGA HAS GOT IT RIGHT

Dear SSM

I've been avidly following your coverage of Sega's new 128-bit machine and have to say that there is one thing in particular that is bugging me - its design. I'm not talking about its internal architecture, as clearly Sega has got things right this time, listening to what developers want from a console and then carrying these instructions out with a competent array of backers (NEC, Microsoft etc). No, my problem is with the casing. It seems to me and many of my friends that Sega simply ran out of ideas when it got to that part or just knocked something up for the May show and stuck with it. It may be small and very compact, but to the casual eye it looks exactly the same as a Nintendo 64 or a PlayStation. Even the colour schemes are very near to each other, and this is a matter of much concern. I hope some sort of alternative casing can be produced in time for the European launch next year.



Yes. Their likeness is truly uncanny. LEE

Except that Dreamcast is white while N64 is black and PlayStation grey. Truly, there are greater matters to be concerned with... like software, for instance. RICH

A STALKER WRITES...

Dear SSM

Congratulations on producing the best games mag around. I'd just like to say that your Dreamcast coverage has been absolutely superb. And as Rich said in the last issue, SSM really has become the only place for Dreamcast news. I must say I was slightly disappointed at the lack of software shown for the system, though it's obvious that Sega is keeping things under wraps until the software is complete. Come October time, the whole world will surely fall to its knees in awe at Sega Rally 2, Virtua Fighter 3, Scud Race played over the Internet. I can't wait. By the way Lee, did you enjoy your holiday in the Mediterranean?

James Ross, York

That's a bit over-familiar. You're scaring me. LEE

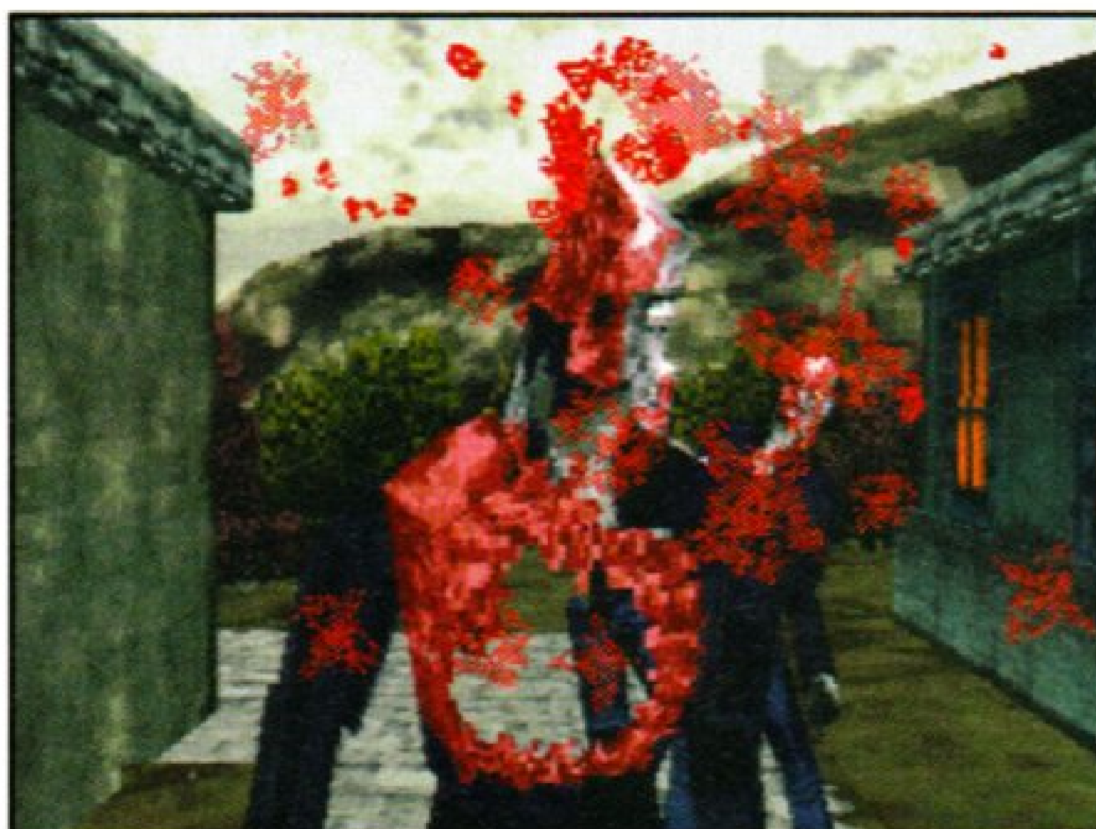
CHEAP IMPORT GAMES HERE!

Dear SSM

Hopefully without upsetting some of your advertisers too much, there is a solution to J Bright and A Crowther (from July's SSM) complaint that imported games are too expensive. Why don't they import them themselves? I returned from the States about six months ago with my US Saturn so I had little choice but to buy imports. But I order them from the States via the Internet. Games are much cheaper in the US so even Jap imports don't cost much more there. I recently got House of the Dead and Panzer Dragoon Saga sent over and they arrived in four days and it cost me $101.60 which is around £62. That's only £31 a game including delivery to my own front door! Even Japanese Capcom games with the RAM cart bundled in only cost around $70 in the US. Online US importers can be found on the links pages of most decent Saturn web pages and most readers must have some access to the Internet. With the Internet, a credit card and a few minutes you can offset the price of your Saturn conversion by buying two games! Makes sense to me!

I use 'The Rage' at http://www.therage.com and they have never failed me, but readers will be able to find their own online importer with a little leg work. I hope you do print this in some form or other as it could save people a lot of money and heartache when they can't find the game they want in the import stores! Great mag - loved the Dreamcast coverage!

Tom Holmes, via email



Get yourself a £2000 PC, and you can get HotD for £31.





My good God Holmes, you've done it again! LEE

If you have Internet access it's worth a go... your import woes could suddenly transform into a rapturous shopping experience in the blink of an eye, but for the vast majority of SSM readers who aren't on the Net, importing remains an expensive, yet worthwhile proposition. Especially with games like Castlevania X and Radiant Silvergun about. Do it! Do it now! RICH

WANTED: DEAD OR ALIVE

Dear SSM

Well what can you say? According to Sega Europe, there is no demand for Dead or Alive, except that created by SSM. If that is the case, are SSM now employed by Sony as I now see Dead or Alive is to be released by PlayStation, Sega got there first and blew it. A simple conversion to Europe standard and Sega again manage to let loyal Sega followers down. We try to buy all the official software and avoid the imports if at all possible, to support further releases, but when something like this happens we may as well have Saturns fixed as standard with a country conversion switch. Alternatively we all go out and buy a PlayStation where Sony seems more willing to supply the public with what they want. With the forthcoming release of Dreamcast, I wonder what marketing strategy Sega will undertake?

S Harper, Grimsby

Briefly...

Dear SSM

I know you've been encouraging your readers to get their Saturns modified at import shops, but really, there's no need. It isn't all that difficult to do it yourself. Just remove the outer casing from the Saturn, get hold of the necessary switches and fit them yourself. It's really simple, honest.

Dean Gregg, Kent

There you go readers. Don't bother with the traditional rope and razor blades. Dean here has a surefire way of killing yourself. Remove the Saturn casing, stick a screwdriver in the works and run 240 volts through your body. Nice one (joke). LEE

So unplug it first, obviously. Seriously, you can get a self-modification FAQ from the Internet, but unless you can solder and feel confident drilling holes into her Saturn casing, leave it to the professionals. RICH

Dear SSM

I have seen Lee Nutter in London Zoo with his furry mates. The weird smell in the office could be coming from Lee Nutter too.

Chris Mulhern, London

PS I hate Lee Nutter

Ooooh.... get back in the knife drawer. LEE

It's funny because it's true. RICH

Dear SSM

Tell me, is Lee Nutter really leaving SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE? I think this would be a terrible shame for your magazine. Is Rich just being tight with the budget or something?

Andrew Morgan, Liverpool

No and yes. LEE

No, Lee isn't leaving and yes, it is a terrible shame. RICH

Dear SSM

As well as including NHL teams, why doesn't Sega and EA include our own native ISL (Ice Hockey Superleague) in their respective ice-hockey games, as it has seen growing support over the last couple of years and is a lot more popular than badger baiting which you compared it with a couple of issues ago.

Tim Griffiths, Bristol

You'd be surprised how popular badger baiting is round our way. LEE

Dear SSM

After seeing your pics of D2 on the Dreamcast in the last issue, I was a little disappointed because I could see from the still pictures that the animation was rubbish. I know it's early days still, but if you look at games on N64 like NWO vs WCW or All-Star Baseball the animation is absolutely BRILLIANT.

Ben Smith, Ipswich

So you could tell from the still pictures that the animation was rubbish? A contradiction in terms, surely. LEE

Yep. Sega Europe's reluctance to splash the cash and licence Dead or Alive is a blunder of unparalleled proportions... LEE

... But the bottom line is that Sega is saving all of its cash for a triumphant Dreamcast launch. It's called "long term planning". Sure, it pisses us off in the short term, but next year the "leopard will reveal its true spots" and "the glove will be on the other foot" to quote Sega Europe's Mark Maslowicz. Oh, my god... we're doomed! RICH

VF3 FOR DREAMCAST OR SATURN?

DEAR SSM

After reading issue #33 of your fine magazine, I thought I would write and tell you my views on the new machine. I have been a big fan of Sega since the Master System was released and now own a Megadrive and Saturn. The new machine looks fantastic and can't wait for it's grand release early next year. The 128-bit console looks set to grab back Sega's great past, with games like Sega Rally 2 and Echo the Dolphin. As I saw in your interview with the Sega president in issue #33, I liked the idea of how Mr Irimajiri had sensors attached to his face and the facial mannerisms were captured. The idea of an interactive face is great! Although I couldn't believe at first that the Dreamcast could beat Model 3.

In the near future, I hope to become a computer programmer and work alongside Sega, although I realise that my chances of this are slim to nothing. I wish Sega the best of luck with its new machine in the future. By the way, any news on whether VF3 is arriving on Saturn or Dreamcast?

Grant Stubbs, Yorks

No news on VF3 yet. But we're expecting Sega to make some big announcements in August or September, so hopefully we'll know more next issue. LEE

WHAT'S THE DELAY?

DEAR SSM

On the subject of evolving the magazine and covering the new Dreamcast machine more, the answer is surely, "yes!" We can't go on talking about the Saturn for another 15 months and it would be stupid not to give as much information on Dreamcast as possible. Issue #33 of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE was really good, better than the last two partly because it featured a lot of Dreamcast shots and information.

I'm a bit annoyed at the time gap between the Japanese and UK releases as I see myself as a bit more than a casual gamer and I am very tempted to get it on import. The thought of an arcade perfect version of Virtua Fighter 3 (in any language) is surely a good enough reason to buy one on import.

If I get the PAL Dreamcast where will that leave me? I can cope with the flow of games just now (given the high quality of UK releases and imports), but what about in six months time? You can't seriously tell me that the number of games coming out will be as high as it is now and I'm not getting a PlayStation or N64 and I don't have the money to really keep up with the PC games scene. So import would be the only option, but really it would all be easier if the release gap wasn't soooo big.

Adam Carrel, Glasgow

Agreed. LEE

But what's the alternative? Release the console simultaneously? Sure it would be marvellous for us who "dig" arcade conversions and Japanese RPGs, but the bottom line is that Sega needs a wide range of games to appeal to its Western audience... and they won't turn up overnight, or more specifically by November. Patience, my friend... RICH

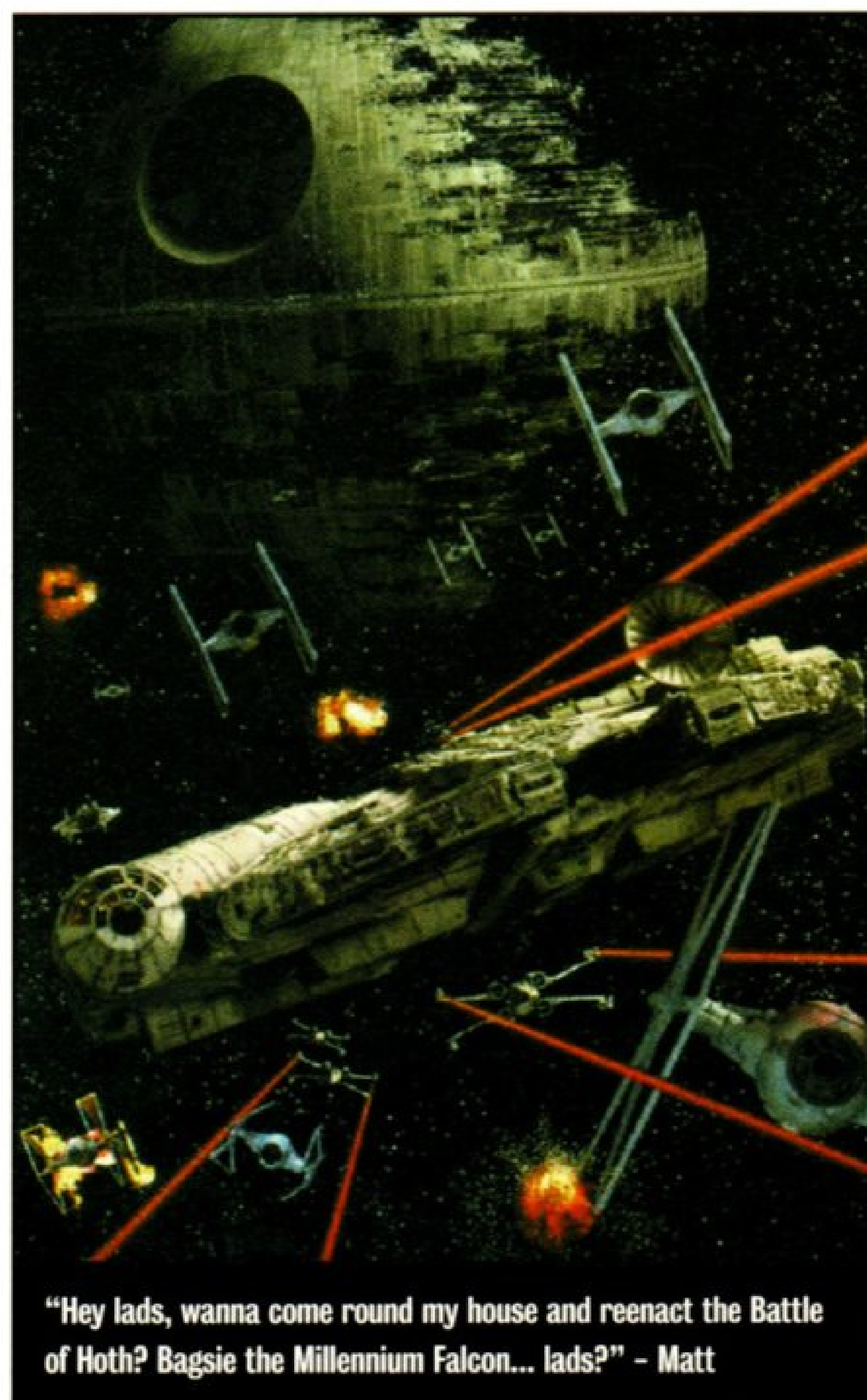
STAR WARS ON DREAMCAST?

DEAR SSM

I'd like to express my relief at Sega's decision to produce a developer friendly console. Hopefully in the future this will mean more big name exclusives will make their way onto the Dreamcast instead of PlayStation all the time. SquareSoft should pull its fingers out and do Final Fantasy VIII on Dreamcast, Rare could do Diddy Kong Racing 2, Sega could get Namco to do Tekken 4 and LucasArts could do an exclusive game based on the new Star Wars prequels. By the way, are you all really big fans of Star Wars?

Nigel Gregg, Maidstone

Yep. It's right up there with Confessions of a Window Cleaner and Batman & Robin. LEE



"Hey lads, wanna come round my house and reenact the Battle of Hoth? Bagsie the Millennium Falcon... lads?" – Matt

I SOLD MY PS FOR A SATURN

DEAR SSM

I sold my PlayStation because I felt there weren't enough decent games and bought a Saturn. I've owned several consoles and have seen the Saturn described in it's old age as the "Spectrum of the '90s". Well, many computer game veterans will tell you that the Spectrum was the best machine they ever owned. I have no illusions - I don't predict it has a year left as a viable format, but what it has are some of the best games ever written. Does anyone think that original classics such as Panzer Saga, NiGHTS and Burning Rangers would have come from the old Sega? Sega's spell out in the cold has made it a better company creatively and I can't wait for Dreamcast. Some don't think Dreamcast can make it in the face of Sony but Nintendo, Atari and Sega knows that success in one generation doesn't mean jack shit when the next is unveiled. Enjoy your Saturn and its games (everybody should get their machine switched!) and never ever sell it...

Alex Hardy, via email

It's a fact that no hardware manufacturer has been able to maintain its market advantage from one generation of consoles to the next [apart from NES to Super NES in Japan - RICH]. That being the case, we fully expect Sega to retain the dominant position in the console market

I WANNA GIVE POSH SPICE ONE!

DEAR SSM

I've been thinking a lot lately about the dismal failure of the Saturn (I know it's still doing well in Japan, but that's not a lot of good to me) and what brought about this dramatic turnaround of fortune for the once mighty Sega. You'd think that with the incredible success of the Megadrive to its credit, Sega could easily have made the Saturn a force to be reckoned with. Clearly that just didn't happen.

You've got to say that Sega made several big mistakes in the early days of the machine and have paid dearly since.

For example, I heard that developers were sent kits out very late, and when they got them found them difficult to programme for (something for which the Saturn was notorious). This resulted in a trickle of games emerging on the system, as opposed to the avalanche of albeit lesser quality PlayStation titles. Quality over quantity is all very well, but consumers like choice. And where was Sonic? It took three years to get a proper Sonic game out, and even then it wasn't really what the masses wanted. We want a true 3D Sonic platformer. Not an old compilation pack or racing game, good as they were.

Sega's adverts were rubbish and far too infrequent to have make any sort of indentation on Sony's outrageous market advantage.

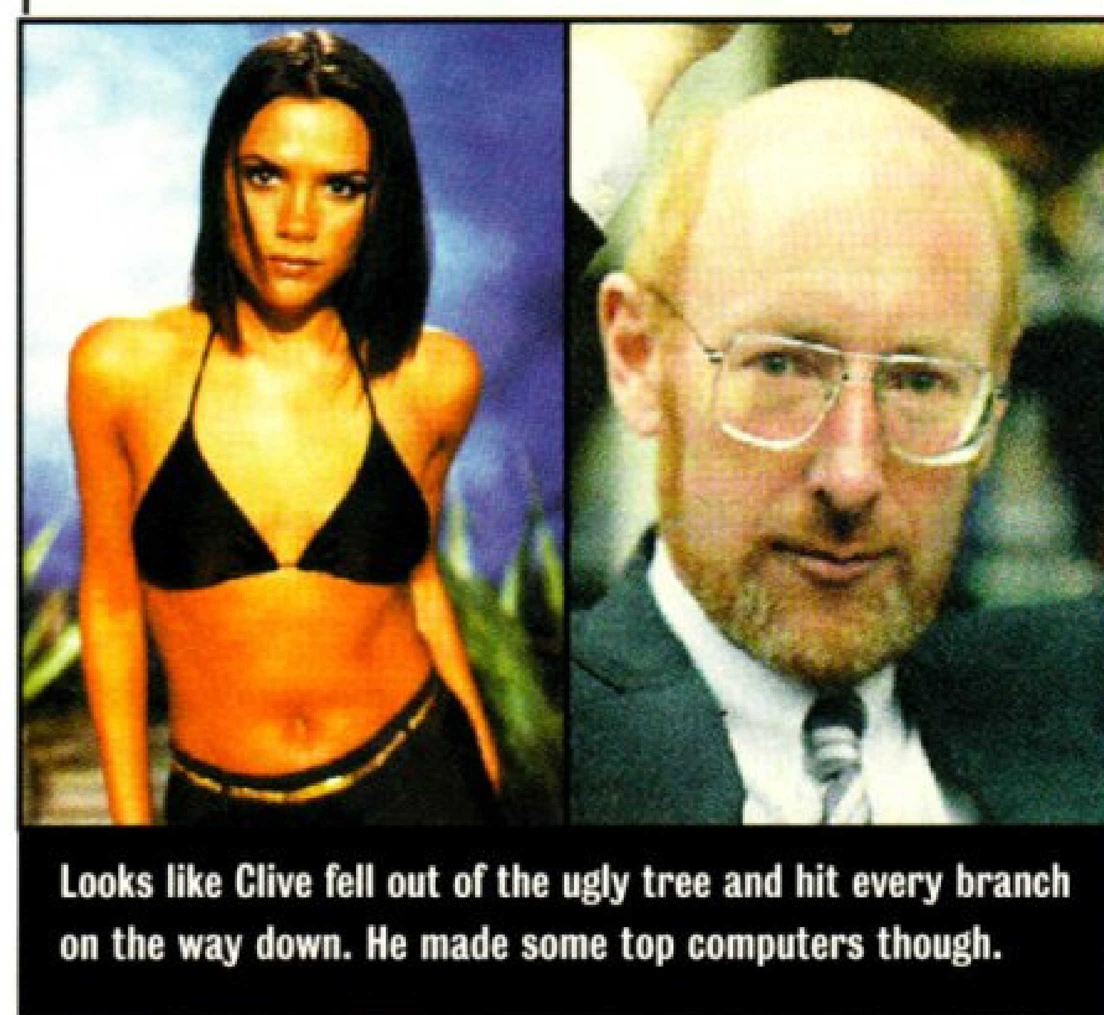
But I'm not getting on Sega's back about it, what's done is done. I'm just happy in the knowledge that all of these issues appear to have been solved for the forthcoming Dreamcast console. Sony must surely be quaking (excuse the pun, but where's the PlayStation version of Quake?) in its boots. Yes, it's sad to see the untimely demise of the Saturn, but the future is genuinely looking bright. Sega should adopt that as its motto or something. November 20th just can't come soon enough for me. Six months and counting!

Dave Bradshaw, Lewisham

PS As a matter of interest, could you please tell your faithful readership which is your favourite of the remaining Spice Girls? Personally, I'd like to give Posh Spice one.

Yeah, we like Posh Spice too. She won't be head-hunted by MENSA, but then who wants to shag Clive Sinclair anyway? LEE

Posh Spice would be even better if it didn't look as though she been hit in the face with a spade. RICH



Looks like Clive fell out of the ugly tree and hit every branch on the way down. He made some top computers though.

it once held, considering the power of the machine and Sega's proposed strategy. I'm not sure if its "spell out in the cold" has made it a better company creatively though. Sega has always made truly fantastic games and will continue to do so. LEE

DAZZLED BY PLAYSTATION HYPE

Dear SSM,

Two weeks ago was a turning point in my gaming life. You see, I was walking down a side street in my local town and I couldn't help but notice that a Saturn with a £35 price ticket slapped on it was sitting in the window of a pawnbrokers. There was nothing I could do, I just had the overwhelming desire to buy it there and then. I've never been anti-Sega, but I'd been concentrating on my collection of retro import machines over the last couple of years in the form of a PC Engine and Neo Geo.

That's all changed now though, I really can't get enough of the machine, every waking hour is spent wondering which game I should buy next and counting the hours 'til I can knock off work and get home to get burnt to death as Tillis again! I've found that most of the back catalogue of software can be picked up for peanuts if you shop around, and the machine has some particularly good software being released for it. I bought Burning Rangers the other day and it's a totally absorbing and challenging game, it's a classic example of what I've been missing while I've been dazzled by the PlayStation hype.

I'm personally really looking forward to the release of Dreamcast, okay so it's essentially going to mean that the Saturn will gracefully fade into the background, but if any SSM readers have any fears that this will mean instant death for their beloved console, then they should take heart from the continuing life that the PC Engine enjoys. There is a thriving global community of PC Engine fans out there whose mission it is to collect all 800 odd titles for the machine. The Saturn is a superb machine, and its memory and software will live on long after Dreamcast has established itself as the best console ever.

Mark Campbell, via email



And with that point Mark hits the nail right on the head. Yeah, new Saturn releases may be drying up, but there's a fantastic back catalogue of games to collect at astonishingly cheap prices (see next letter). LEE

Are there really people out there after all 800 PC Engine games? Really? Having said that I distinctly remember this ace PCE title called Toilet Kids... a somewhat apt title for those blinkered PS-only owners. RICH

QUAKE FOR A TENNER!

Dear SSM

I've just purchased Quake (I know what you're thinking "just recently"), but for a mere £10. Also in the shop was Duke Nukem 3D for £15, Wipeout 2097 at £15, Virtua Cop 2 for £15 plus lots more. If this isn't a good reason to own a Saturn I don't know what is. And the great shop I hear you ask? Dixons. What a lovely bunch of people.

Stephen Mason, Oxon



You'd be mad not to pick up Quake for a tenner!



Yep. One of the more dubious advantages of owning a Saturn is that high street shops are desperate to get rid of the software, hence the ridiculously cheap prices. LEE

NICE COVERAGE!

Dear SSM

Nice coverage of the new Dreamcast machine. I noted that Sega will not be releasing this over here in Europe until Autumn 1999!Sega is also quoted as saying that this will be the best console for the next few years. Well, you only have to look at the history of the PC to see that things will change very rapidly.

The release date of Autumn 1999 is way too late. Intel has already committed to releasing 500MHz+ PIIs. The new 3Dfx cards will be released which will be better than the current Power VR card. I think Sega is far too optimistic to think today's technology will stand up to 18 months of competitive development! I can't see Sony releasing a console that isn't better than Sega's, especially as it now knows the specifications to beat.

One of the reasons for delaying the release is said to be the lack of software. If Dreamcast uses Microsoft's CE operating system, then isn't there already a large PC software base out there that could be converted? Yes, I appreciate that there is a large amount of dross that shouldn't be converted, but there is also some excellent software.

I can't see how Sega could possibly hope to get a substantial user base for the new Dreamcast console before Sony releases its new PlayStation2 machine. Let's hope that I'm just being pessimistic!

Karl, via email



Dreamcast comprehensively out-quaffs PC technology as it stands at the moment, and yes, maybe a 500MHz PII with a Rampage level 3Dfx will beat it (maybe)... but the cost of the 3D card in itself will be the same as the Dreamcast... and what about all the console developers coding just for Dreamcast. Do you reckon you'll see Capcom's finest on PC? Or Sonic Team's efforts? Yes, Dreamcast brings console and PC development closer together, but they're aimed at different users with different types of game in mind, with minimal crossover... Bottom line: this is a £200 console (that matches Model 3 performance) we're fired up about, not a £1,800 PC. RICH

IS SEGA HIBERNATING?

Dear SSM

Like most readers of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE I am very excited about the new Dreamcast machine. However, there are several things about the console which are troubling me.

The first is Dreamcast's 2D abilities. We have all been amazed by its 3D miracles, but there has been no mention of how it could handle something such complex games as X-Men vs Street Fighter. After all, the PlayStation is a powerful 3D machine, but is crap when it comes to doing something like X-Men: Children of the Atom. The Sega President himself said that "third parties who have very good capabilities with 2D graphics will find the Saturn to be the best machine". Please try and put my mind at rest and say that its 2D power rivals that of its incredible 3D processing power.

My other concern is regarding the huge gap that exists between the Japanese and European release dates. The reason they give of making games suitable for the Western market is fair enough, but the problem is that games releases for the Saturn these days are getting few and far between. With Dreamcast over a year away, what on earth will Sega Europe be doing? Catching up on other unreleased games such as Grandia and Dead or Alive or is Sega simply hibernating?

J Coates, Durham



I wouldn't worry too much about the 2D capabilities of Dreamcast. In fact, the word around the camp fire is that Capcom is working on such incredible 2D arcade hits as Marvel vs Capcom, Street Fighter III: Second Impact and Street Fighter Alpha 3 for Dreamcast. So there's no worries there then. Sega Europe on the other hand is likely to be spending the forthcoming year preparing for the biggest console launch in videogames history. Hibernating indeed. LEE

THE MAD JOCK MCMAD AWARD FOR LITERARY LUNACY!



Welcome once again to the mad, mad world of the Mad Jock McMad section of Virtua Writer. As we mentioned in the last issue of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, this section is reserved for the most mentally disturbed missive of the month. This issue, it's this simple email that receives the award. There is no prize for this coveted accolade. It merely serves as a warning - especially so in the case of this very stupid young fool...

From: "BLAKEN" [BLAKEN@harveygs.kent.sch.uk]
To: [richard.leadbetter@ecm.emap.com]
Date: Tue, 9 Jun 1998 12:10:03 +0100
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal

"We know where you live, and we know where your mufa lives. Ok Mr.Chicken".

Here's just a quick tip for anyone else who decides to email me with threatening missives... don't include your return address. From this I quickly deduced that Mr Blake (first name either Neil or Nigel, I reckon) goes to school in Kent in the United Kingdom. A quick search on the Internet for "Harvey School Kent" came up with the following intriguing information:

The Harvey Grammar School
Cheriton Road
Folkestone Kent
CT19 5JY
01303 252131
Kent

Your school is actually in the top 20 best performing grammar schools in England, yet you seem to be having difficulty with basic spelling and grammar... and don't go bringing my "mufa" into it, alright? By the way, I wonder what your deputy head master, Mr Wright, would think about all this, eh? RICH

Q&A

An inevitable sense of dread and despondency hangs over me as I write this, knowing full well that the next hour of my valuable time is to be wasted answering inane and repetitive questions which have little relevance to the majority of our readers. "When's PlayStation 2 coming out? How much will it cost? How many polygons will it do?" Alright, already. Enough I tell you! More interesting and original question next month! Send mail to No more PlayStation2 Q+A, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, 37-39 Millharbour, London E14 9TZ. Or email ssm.qa@ecm.emap.com.

MIND-BLOWING QUESTIONS? 'SHYEAH RIGHT!

Dear SSM,

We're writing to ask a few questions about the Dreamcast. This is our first time writing in and don't have a lot to say really, so we'll get straight to the point with a few mind-blowing questions,

1. Why is the European Dreamcast taking a year longer than the Japanese machine to be launched?
2. Has anything been decided about the final colour of the Dreamcast casing?
3. Is the VMS coming out before the actual console?

Mark and Lee, via email


1. Because the launch has got to be perfect and that requires more planning, more development time, and more recruitment of third parties. The wait will be worth it, trust me. 2. Not that I know about. 3. In Japan, VMS is out now (hence the report in the news section). But for Europe and the US, it'll doubtless appear with the machine next year.

NOMAD? WHAT IS IT?

Dear SSM,

I WANT ANSWERS! Please.

1. I was flicking through CVG when I came across this advert that said it was selling Sega Nomads for £99. I wasn't even aware of the Sega Nomad's existence could you please give me some info on it and maybe a pic of the machine as well?
2. What are the 2D capabilities of the Dreamcast?
3. Is Sega likely to change the control pad so that it has six front buttons instead of four?
4. Why do the controller sockets look so 'evil'?

'Jacob' via email


1. The Nomad is a handheld Megadrive with colour display. You can connect it to a TV if you want and use it like a normal unit. However, if carts have country protection (eg. Gunstar Heroes) they won't run 'cos it's a US machine so a good source for US carts is required. Also £99 is a bit pricey. I bought mine in the States for $60 - about forty quid. It's an awesome machine, although it drinks battery power like nobody's business. 2. It's easier to make each sprite a textured 3D polygon viewed side-on, meaning that 2D performance is even more powerful! That's what Yu Suzuki said last issue. 3. Nope, the controller's fine as it is. 4. Eh? What on earth do you mean?

TOMB RAIDER 3? HMMM...

Dear SSM

I have a few questions concerning the Dreamcast:

1. I know D2 is the only CONFIRMED game for DC but would you expect Fighting Vipers 2 to be converted?
2. Is their any chance of HudsonSoft producing a new Bomberman game for Dreamcast?
3. Has Sega Europe decided to include a modem in the Dreamcast package yet?
4. What are the chances of Tomb Raider 3 coming to the Dreamcast as the deal between Sony and Core should be up by the time DC is released?
5. Will Sega do what Nintendo did with the N64 and launch it into the UK with only 20,000 consoles on sale and then cut the price after one month, or will there be a lot of machines available for the UK launch at a low price (for consoles)?

Chris J Haig, Taunton


1. It would be nice wouldn't it? But who knows what's going to happen with regard to the mysterious AM2 department? 2. It's a strong possibility what with the machine's networking power. 3. The issue is still up in the air. 4. Sony's deal with Core expires on January 1, 2000, around three months after the machine's launch. Think about it. 5. No way - this is Sega's biggest launch in their history.

HAVE YOU READ THE MAG?

Dear SSM

This is the first time I've written a letter to you SSM gods so could you please answer some simple questions for me?

1. On the last SSM mag, you showed some pics of the Dreamcast. On one of the pics of the Iri-San demo it showed Sonic running past. Does this mean that Sega will make a decent Sonic game for the new machine?
2. I heard that an Ecco the Dolphin game is also planned. Is this true?
3. Will Virtua Fighter 3 be launched with the system?
4. When the Dreamcast is finally released over here, will you guys scrap the Saturn and turn to the Dreamcast or will you opt to do a joint Saturn and Dreamcast mag?
5. How has Rich Leadbetter managed to get his name in the end credits of Panzer Saga and Sonic R for that matter?

Keep up the good work and thanks for answering!

Adam Cannon, Birmingham



Sonic on Dreamcast? What do you reckon, eh?


1. It doesn't actually mean that Sonic will appear, but the fact is that the Sonic Team are working on a triumphant 128-bit return for Sega's mighty hedgehog mascot - and that's official! 2. Yes, because you heard it from me in this magazine! 3. We should find out for sure in the next couple of months, but I reckon it's a must, personally. 4. See page four this month. 5. I don't know, but it's good isn't it? By the way you forgot to mention my name check in the Duke Nukem 3D and Quake credits too!

N64 IS DEAD IN JAPAN

Dear SSM

Your interview on the Dreamcast was very interesting. My mate thinks that the N64 and the 64DD will be more powerful. Anyway, please answer my questions.

1. Will Dreamcast be better than the N64 and 64DD?
2. Will there be a Burning Rangers game on Dreamcast?
3. What cheats are there for Burning Rangers?
4. Do you have any cheats for Exhumed?
5. Does anyone know when Resident Evil 2 is coming out for the Saturn?

Adam Elkins, Keighley


1. No way - 64DD gives more storage space (but still not as much as CD) and more memory for the base system. But in terms of sheer 3D power, N64 is left dead and buried, with or without the 64DD. N64 is virtually dead in Japan by the way, I didn't even see one for sale while I was out there. 2. Sonic Team are hard at work on a certain game based on a blue hedgehog at this time... 3. The ones we printed in the last issue of SSM, yes. 4. No - why ruin such an awesome game? 5. Well, er... Capcom presumably?

FAQ

It's about questions. Specifically those of the "frequently asked" variety. And here they are in all their glory.

1. Any chance of an official Radiant Silvergun release?


Extremely unlikely. What games Sega Europe produces (if any) after Deep Fear are mostly likely to be its own first party efforts brought over from Japan.

2. Do you have any news on Shining Force III Parts 2 and 3? I've just gotta know!


The game's only just gone on sale and it's going to need to sell well in the US and Europe in order to convince Sega to translate the following parts. We live in hope. Still.

3. Will Daytona 2/Sega Rally 2/Spike be coming out for the Dreamcast?


Model 3 conversions are supposed to be "stress free", according to AM2's Yu Suzuki, but Sega aims to tailor its arcade produce to the home market. So what games will actually appear remains a mystery until more of the firm's strategy becomes clear.

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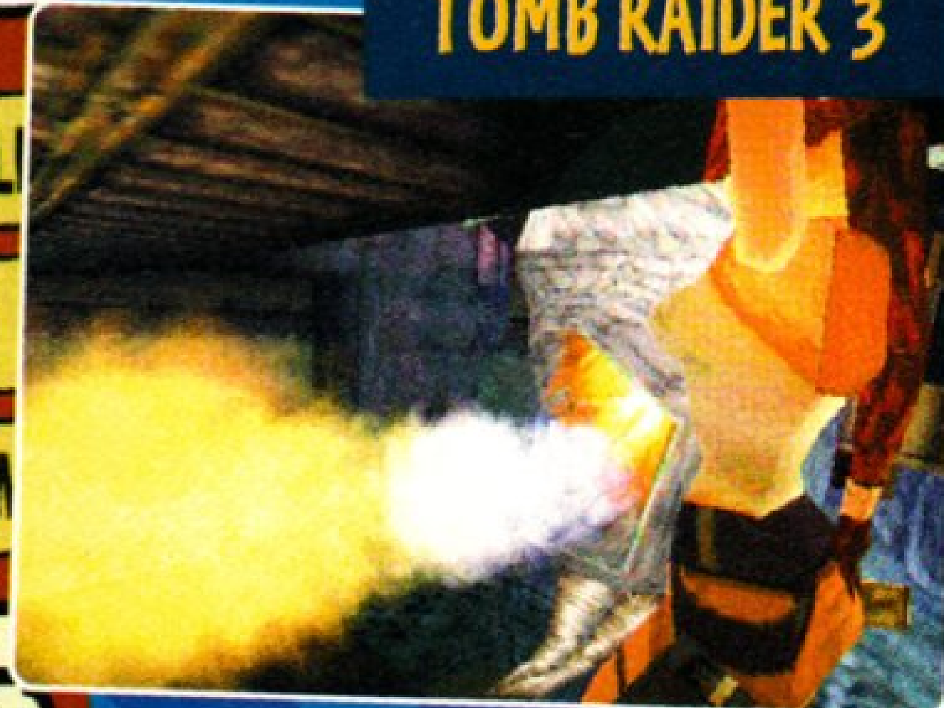
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TEKKEN 3 REVIEW





DREAMCAST: SEGA'S NEW CONSOLE – HOTTEST NEWS

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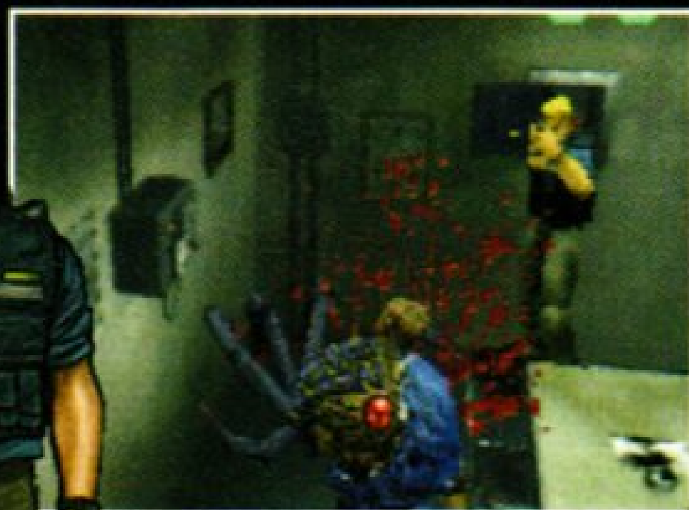
The Poseidon Adventure!

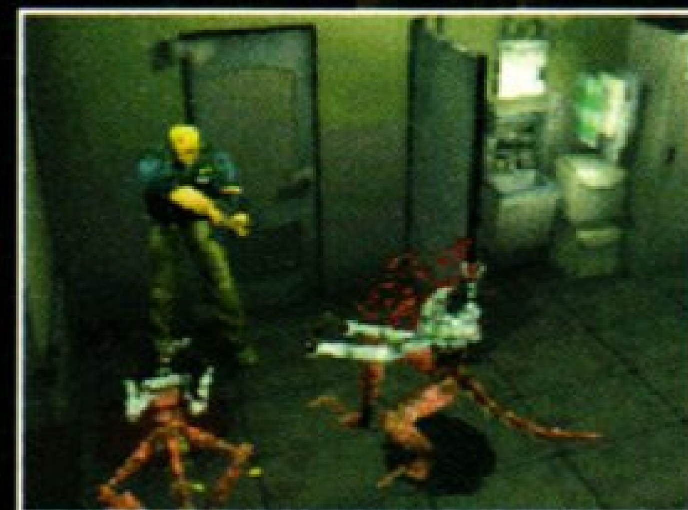
With the Japanese game now complete, a fully translated version of Deep Fear should be heading your way within a matter of weeks. LEE NUTTER takes an in-depth look at what to expect.

These are exciting times for Sega enthusiasts. A new era of gaming excellence is being ushered in, with the most incredible line-up of games on the most powerful console to date about to be unveiled any day now. We can't wait - and judging by the amount of phone calls and correspondence we've had over the last couple of months, neither can you.

But as the stunning array of games in this very issue demonstrate, the Saturn isn't dead by a long shot. Radiant Silvergun, Shining Force III and Deep Fear are just some of the best games kicking around at the moment... and they're all exclusive to the Saturn. Reason enough to be very excited indeed. The latter of these is the subject of this month's showcase and one of the best adventure titles you're likely to play. Mixing elements from such diverse sources as Resident Evil, Men in Black and The Abyss, it looks certain to be a big hit for Sega this summer.







◀ Deep Fear is on target for a mid-September release. Bet you can't wait?

BITS WOT WE LIKE

It has to be said that whilst I enjoy beat 'em ups and shoot 'em ups as much as the next man, I relish the opportunity to play a game that I can really get my teeth into. With its diverse range of puzzles, absorbing plot and blood-thirsty gameplay, Deep Fear is clearly such a game. Not since Resident Evil has a



▲ A single blast from the shotgun should take out the smaller creatures.





▲ The story-advancing FMV sequences are of superb quality.



▲ Deep Fear isn't quite as gory as Resident Evil, but the over-the-top violence is still fairly shocking.





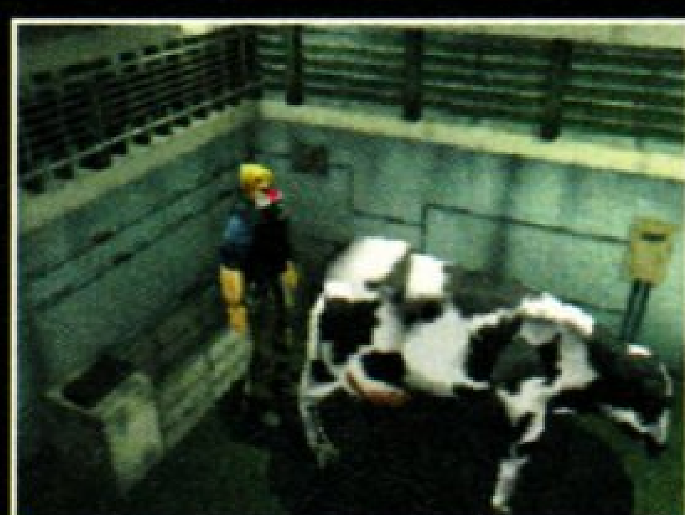


game compelled me to keep on playing for such unhealthy lengths of time, despite the continual protests of my colleagues clambering for use of the equipment. Having now reached the point where I've seen everything Deep Fear has to offer (hey, am I getting paid overtime for this?), it's time to take you through some of the highlights.

MY HEAD HURTS

Okay, hands up all those who got stuck on the Doom Books in Resident Evil? Or the five levers in the Palace Midas level of Tomb Raider? Well there are plenty of similar moments in Deep Fear. The incident with the locked safe springs to mind, where a four digit code is required to gain access. Of course, you saw the answer on the back of some dog tags an hour previously, but you chose to ignore them as they were meaningless at that point in time. It's frustrating, I know, but ultimately rewarding when you finally manage to overcome puzzles and progress further into the game. By the way, just to preempt the flood of pesky phone calls we'll undoubtedly receive on the matter, we're currently working on a Deep Fear players guide for a forthcoming edition of SSM. Fret not!





DIE MOOKIE, DIE!

Not to give too much of the plot away, we were particularly pleased to see the early departure of one of Deep Fear's most

Given the high enemy quota in Deep Fear, you'd expect there to be a decent range of weapons to get to grips with, wouldn't you? Well there is, so quit complaining.

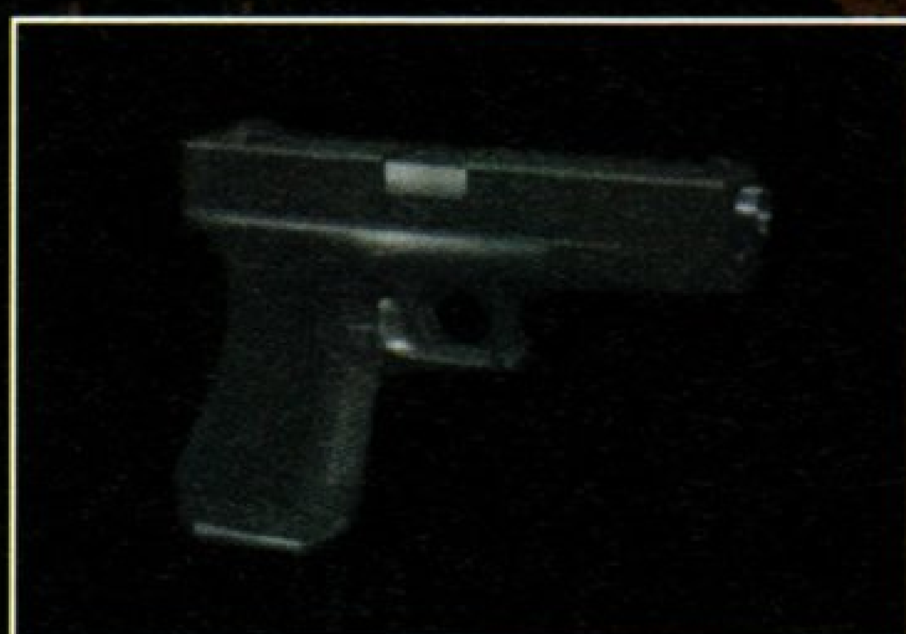




WEAPONS

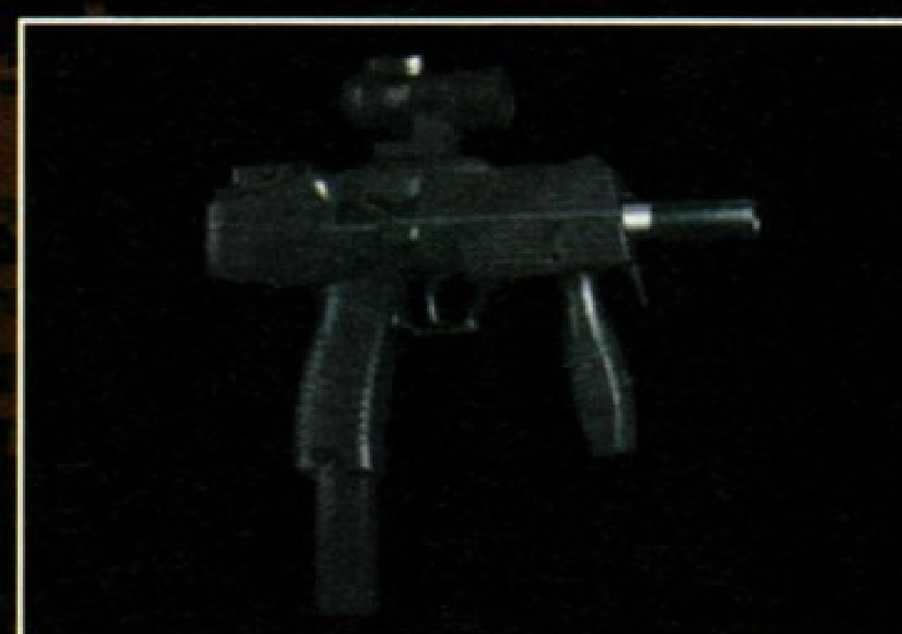
ROBER GLOCK G17

The Glock G17 hand pistol is the default Deep Fear weapon. It's not exactly powerful, firing bullets at mid-range distance with limited effect. Use it until a more powerful weapon comes along.



STEYR TMP

The Steyr TMP semi-automatic machine gun - "when you absolutely positively have to vaporise every mutha in the room, accept no substitute." Ammo consumption is high though, so use sparingly.



MOSSBERG M500ATP

The weapon of choice in Deep Fear. This ultra-powerful shotgun is quick-firing and extremely powerful, taking down less-powerful monsters with a single well-aimed blast.



KPG L9

The KPG L9 is a powerful weapon capable of taking down just about any monster with only a couple of blasts. However, the KPG L9 harpoon gun is restricted to underwater use only.



M75 GRENADE

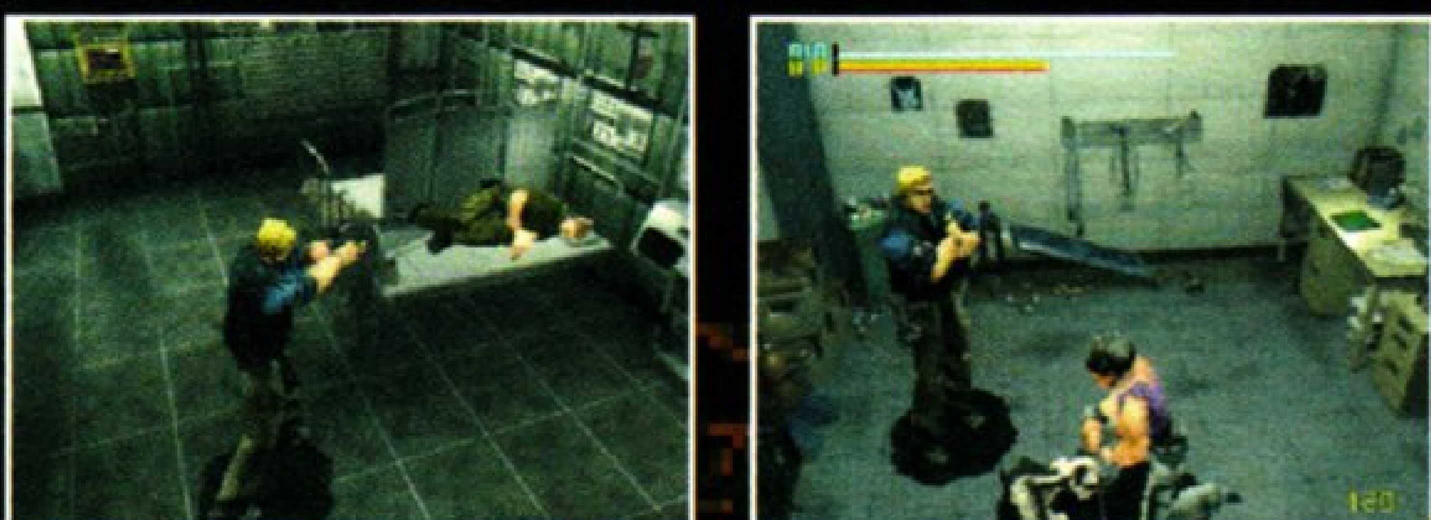
Best used when cornered in a room by multiple monsters, the M75 Grenade destroys everything within its range. Fresh supplies are limited though, so only use when absolutely necessary.



AIR MASK

Not a weapon as such, but an essential piece of kit nonetheless. The air mask provides oxygen for a limited period of time, allowing operatives to breathe for limited periods of time underwater.





▲ In-game graphics are used for some of the story-advancing sections.





▲ Keep shooting the monsters when they're down or they'll just get back up again.

irritating characters. Adding credence to the old adage of never turning your back on a genetically mutated human/extra-terrestrial hybrid, Mookie paid the ultimate price for his sarcastic gags and practical joking tomfoolery. His death was bloody and painful, yet oddly amusing at the same time. RIP: Mookie.

BE AFRAID... BE VERY AFRAID

Remember the first time you experienced walking through the eerily quiet corridors of Resident Evil and a pack of ravenous Cerberus Dogs smashed through the window and proceeded to take huge chunks of flesh out of you? Well there are plenty of similarly scary moments in store for first time players of Deep Fear. We don't want to spoil it for you by releasing details just yet, but rest assured all is not what it seems in Deep Fear...



▲ Two of Deep Fear's central characters, Danny Renolds and Gena Weisberg.



TYRANT BOSS-STYLE ACTION

There aren't too many testing moments in the early part of Deep Fear, but the situation takes a sudden turn for the worst when faced with the enormous Tyrant-style creature. There you are, desperately trying to disarm the nuclear warheads aboard the Navy's stealth submarine, when the huge monster bursts onto the scene and starts taking pot-shots at you. Luckily you've just taken delivery of the ultra-powerful Steyr TMP sub-machine gun, which discharges hundreds of rounds in nanoseconds, making short work of the mutant beast.

QUEER GOINGS ON

Aside from Nagi (the lesbian femme fatalé of Last Bronx fame), we find it damn-near impossible to think of any homosexual videogame characters. Well, Deep Fear looks set to redress the

TONIGHT MATTHEW I'M GOING TO BE...

... tough-talking ERS Chief, John Mayor. You know the type - doesn't take no for an answer, prepared to bend the rules to get results "and if the pencil pushers down at City Hall don't like it then they can have my badge" and naturally, a bit of a one with the ladies. Like most of the inter-linked characters in Deep Fear, Mayor brings with him a slightly murky past, more of which is revealed as the game progresses. Inevitably it involves a past love, tragically killed in a freak yachting accident which Mayor himself survived, only to spend the following years consumed by guilt. All this is brought to the fore when her brother (the head of the Navy SEAL team) turns up at the underwater base, with the obvious hostility between them leading to all sorts of complications. Not exactly what you need when you're trying to fend off hordes of genetically mutated monsters, is it?





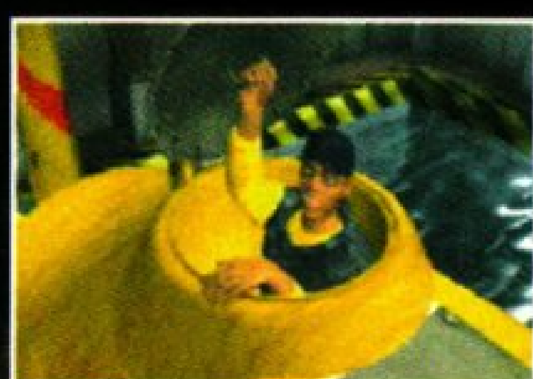


situation, with the most profound and overtly homosexual character you're ever likely to come across. Going by the name of Dubois Amalric, he's the genius who designed the enormous underwater base. The story-advancing sequences with Dubois are undoubtedly a highlight of Deep Fear, if only for his unintentionally humorous and effeminate voice. A word of warning though - be careful when bending over to pick up ammo!

TWO DISCS = TWICE THE FUN!

One of the main criticisms levelled at Capcom's classic Resident Evil is that it doesn't take a superhuman effort to complete. Most reasonably accomplished games players should





▲ Sorry Mookie, but your days are numbered mate.



▲ The puzzles in Deep Fear are pretty tough, so we'll have a guide next issue!



▲ Choose the semi-automatic machine gun to take out the big monsters.

ON-SCREEN TELEMETRY EXPLAINED

So you've marvelled at the fantastic screen shots lavished upon these very pages and absorbed the reams of information in a sponge-like manner. But you still don't know what all the on-screen fad-gadgetry is for. Here's where you find out...

A: AIR SUPPLY
Indicates the air supply left in your breathing apparatus. Used when entering underwater sections of the base and areas where the oxygen supply has depleted.

B: HEALTH POINTS
Basically your energy bar. Sustain an attack from a monster or run out of oxygen and health points dwindle away. May be bolstered with the use of medical supplies.

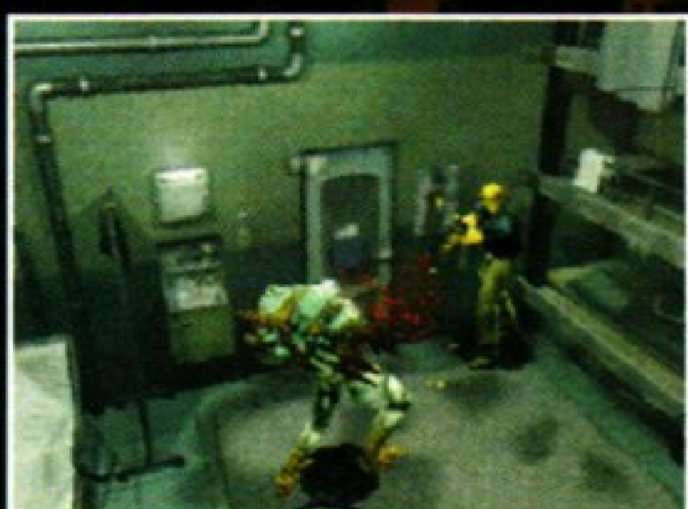
C: AREA INDICATOR
Given the sheer size of the base, it would be very easy to get lost. The area indicator helps avoid this, displaying your exact on-screen position.



D: TIMER
The timer in the top right corner of the screen indicates the amount of oxygen left in the area which you are occupying. If it falls to a dangerously low level (anything below 20), finding the Air Supply Units quickly becomes a priority.

E: AMMO
Simply enough, the number in the bottom right corner of the screen represents the number of bullets remaining in your weapon of choice. Once the ammo is depleted, your ammo supply may be topped up at any of the storage rooms conveniently located around the vast underwater base.









have the game clocked within a day or so, even when playing as the harder of the two playable characters. Well, we're happy to report that this most certainly is not the case with Deep Fear. We reckon that Sega's adventure game is approximately twice the size of Resident Evil, with some enormous puzzles to get your head around and some huge pre-rendered environments to explore. Coupled with the enormous amount of high-quality full-motion video sequences in there, it's a wonder Sega's team of in-house coders managed to squeeze it all onto just two discs. It really is.

▲ There's no escape from the hordes of monsters. Not even in the toilet.

DEEP FEAR REVIEW NEXT MONTH!

Of course, there are several niggling questions still remaining with regard to Sega's awesome action/adventure title. For example, how good is Deep Fear when compared to say, Resident Evil? If I were only able to buy one of these two adventure games, which should I get? Is it as absolutely huge as Tomb Raider? What's that strange hair growth I'm beginning to get down below? They're all really good questions, the answers to which will spring forth in the Deep Fear review, coming atcha in the very next issue of your favourite monthly Sega journal. Oh, yes.



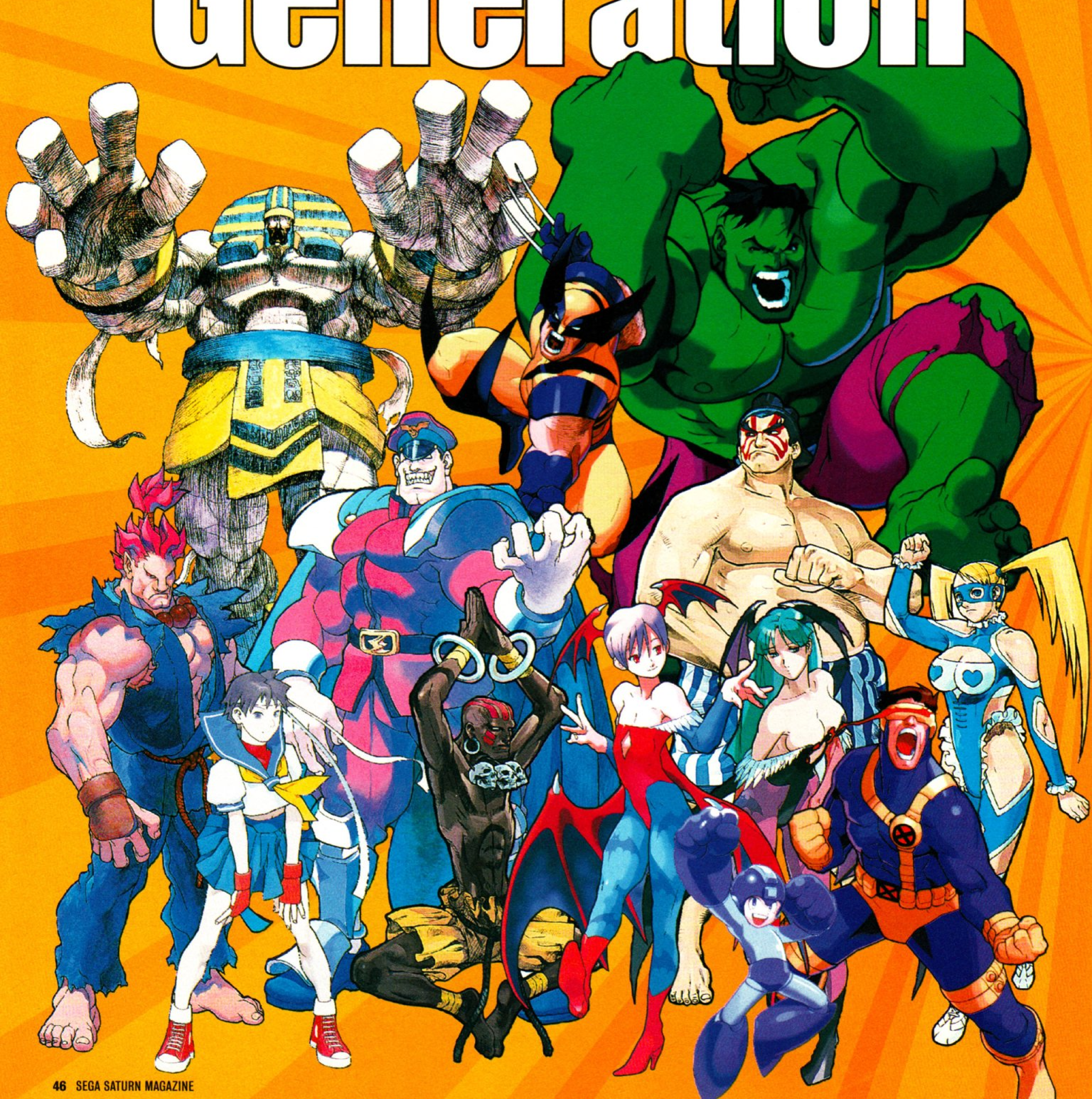
▲ Is Deep Fear better than Resident Evil? Find out for sure next issue!





▲ Get too close to the alien monsters and they'll try to suck your brains out through your nose. Urgh!

The CAPCOM® Generation





WHO ARE YOU?

1 ANAKARIS
2 M BISON
3 WOLVERINE
4 E HONDA
5 HULK
6 MIKA
7 GOUKI
8 SAKURA
9 DHALSIM
10 LILITH
11 MEGAMAN
12 MORRIGAN
13 CYCLOPS
14 GUY
15 BLANKA
16 CAPTAIN COMMANDO
17 KEN
18 CAMMY
19 SPIDER-MAN
20 FELICIA
21 DONOVAN
22 RYU
23 ROLENTO
24 CAPTAIN AMERICA
25 CODY
26 BALROG
27 GEN
28 KARIN
29 ZANGIEF
30 SASQUATCH
31 JIN
32 VENOM
33 STRIDER

FRONT ROW LEFT-HAND SIDE



SECOND ROW LEFT HANDSIDE



FRONT ROW RIGHT-HAND SIDE



SECOND ROW RIGHT-HAND SIDE



One of the Saturn's staunchest third party supporters, Capcom has one of the richest histories in the world of videogames... wonderful gaming titles that this legendary developer aims to bring to the Saturn in the Generations series. So what better time for a retrospective?

CAPCOM'S ARCADE EXCELLENCE!

As far as we can tell, this is a nigh-on complete list of every Capcom arcade game, starting from the 1984 titles, being re-released on Capcom Generation Volume #4, right up to the company's latest arcade smashes, Marvel vs Capcom and Plasma Sword! Even titles that Capcom licensed for the arcade (Trojan and SF: The Movie from Romstar, Toshinden 2 from Takara) can be found in this comprehensive list that spans a mammoth 14 years!



▲ 1941: The franchise moved onto CPS-I with ace results!



▲ Slam Masters: Haggar returned to arcades and SNES!







Left: The CPS-I Cadillacs and Dinosaurs. Above: The Romstar licensed Trojan was okay. Above Left: Carrier Airwing was cool!

1984
Vulgus
Son Son
Higemaru
1942

1985
Exed Exes
Commando
Ghosts 'n' Goblins
Gunsmoke
Section Z

1986
Trojan
Speed Rumbler
Legendary Wings
SideArms

1987
Avenger
Bionic Commando
1943
Black Tiger
Street Fighter
Tiger Road

1988
F1 Dream
1943 Special
Last Duel
Forgotten Worlds
Ghouls 'n' Ghosts

1989
LED Storm
Strider
Dokaben
Dynasty Wars
Willow
Dokaben 2
UN Squadron
Capcom Baseball
Quiz and Dragons
Final Fight

1990
1941
Quiz and Dragons 2
Mercs
MegaTwins
Magic Sword
Carrier Airwing
Nemo



THE CLASSICS!



◀ When side-scrolling 2D fighting games were all the rage (in the days just before Street Fighter), no game could touch the popularity and power of Final Fight! Main character Haggar also turned up in Capcom's Saturday Night Slam Masters, whilst Guy and Cody have made it into recent Street Fighter Alpha offerings.



▲ Guide sword-slingin' Strider through the communist-occupied territories of Eurasia. When Strider was launched he was the most versatile, athletic platform character ever. A 3D version of this game on Dreamcast would be a revelation... Strider Hiyru himself recently cropped up in Marvel vs Capcom!



▲ One of Capcom's weirdest titles, Three Wonders is a trio of mini-games in one coin-op – a scrolling shooting game, a puzzle title and a platform game. Yup, there's a little lack of variety in the graphics, but the gameplay shines through.



▲ Bionic Commando: A brilliantly original coin-op platformer. Take out the jumping and instead put in a retractable bionic hook which you can use to collect objects as well as swing around the platform environs. A '90s update is requested and required!

(BELOW RIGHT) A classic late '80s release... Black Tiger is a platform blaster packed with action, bosses and power-up weaponry. Black Tiger's great! A retro version is requested and required!





▲ Capcom used to rule the roost of 2D shooting games with UN Squadron being one of its finest efforts. The quality of visuals here is astounding... if Capcom added sequel Carrier Airwing and, say, Varth, this would be a superlative Generations CD...

1991
Street Fighter II
Ataxx
Three Wonders
King of Dragons
Block Block
Captain Commando

1992
Knights of the Round
SFII: Champion Edition
Varth
Capcom World
Warriors of Fate
SFII Turbo: Hyper Fighting



1993
Cadillacs and Dinosaurs
The Punisher
Slam Masters
Super Street Fighter II
Muscle Bomber Duo

1994
D&D: Tower of Doom
Super Street Fighter 2 Turbo
Alien vs Predator
Eco Fighter
DarkStalkers
Slam Masters 2
Armoured Warriors
X-Men: Children of the Atom

1995
Night Warriors
Cyberbots
SF: The Movie
Street Fighter Alpha
MegaMan Power Battle
Marvel Super Heroes
Battle Arena Toshinden 2



1996
19XX
D&D: Shadow over Mystara
Street Fighter Alpha 2
Super Puzzle Fighter 2
Star Gladiator
MegaMan 2: The Power Fighters
Street Fighter Zero 2 Alpha
X-Men vs Street Fighter
WarZard
Street Fighter EX



1997
Street Fighter EX Plus
Street Fighter 3
Marvel Super Heroes vs Street Fighter
Battle Circuit
Pocket Fighter
Star Gladiator



1998
Rival Schools
Street Fighter III: Second Impact
Marvel vs Capcom
Plasma Sword
Street Fighter Alpha 3



CAPCOM HOME GAMES

Would you believe it? Capcom has been making games for home systems for 13 years now, starting in its native Japan with a home version of 1942. The firm achieved mass success with NES titles right up until the release of Street Fighter II on Super NES. The rest, as they say, is history... The firm branched out into all formats with the advent of the PlayStation and Saturn and created a new genre - Survival Horror - with the stunning Resident Evil.



▲ NES Bionic Commando (left) and SNES Final Fight!



◀ Capcom's Marvel license also extended to original home titles like X-Men: Mutant Apocalypse on Super NES

1985
1942

1986
Son Son
Ghosts 'n' Goblins
Commando

1987
Trojan
Section Z
MegaMan

1988
GunSmoke
1943
Bionic Commando
MegaMan 2

1989
Destiny of an Emperor
Willow

1990
Duck Tales
Codename: Viper
Yo!Noid
Gargoyles Quest
Chip 'n' Dale: Rescue Rangers
Street Fighter 2010
Duck Tales
MegaMan 3
Dream Master: Little Nemo
Final Fight

1991
The Little Mermaid
MegaMan (Game Boy)
UN Squadron
Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts
MegaMan 4
MegaMan 2 (Game Boy)



▲ MegaMan: The Wily Wars (left) on Megadrive compiled the first three NES MegaMan titles. (Right) Final Fight 3: The arcade franchise was sequeled on the Super NES.



▲ Megadrive SFII - Capcom's first Sega game!



▲ The little known Varth was another classic blaster!



▲ Spot the difference: the Japanese version of coin-op Final Fight (left) was racier than the Western one (right).



▲ US Gold handled conversions of Capcom games to home machines... and they were very poor. US Gold even milked the franchises with poor 'sequels' like the evil Strider 2...

CAPCOM GENERATIONS #1

Capcom's first retro pack contains its coin-op debut, 1942 and sequels, 1943 and 1943 Special. Other sequels, (1941 and 19XX) are conspicuous by their absence... Still, '43 and '43 Special are kind of cool titles!

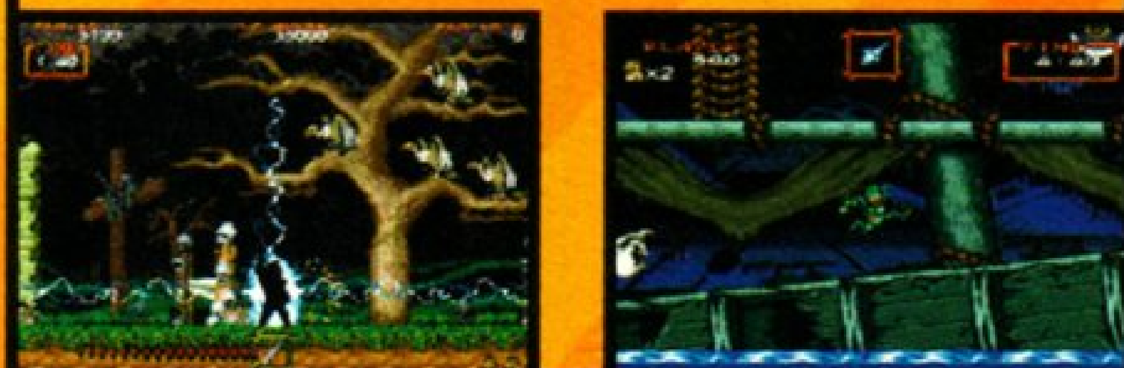




▲ Side Arms and the Punisher: Not so good really!

CAPCOM GENERATIONS #2

Our most anticipated Generations pack, this contains Ghosts 'n' Goblins, arcade sequel Ghouls 'n' Ghosts and Super NES original game Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts. Despite their retro nature, all of these games ooze quality. A Dreamcast update would be amazing...





▲ SFII on Super NES: Capcom's biggest home game ever!

1992
Street Fighter II
Gargoyles Quest 2
Bionic Commando (Game Boy)
Super Buster Bros
Magical Quest
MegaMan 5
MegaMan 3 (Game Boy)

1993
Duck Tales 2
Final Fight 2
Mighty Final Fight (NES)
Street Fighter II Turbo (Super NES)
SFII: Special Champion Edition (Megadrive)
MegaMan IV (Game Boy)
MegaMan VI (NES)
Aladdin (Super NES)
Duck Tales 2
Rescue Rangers
MegaMan X (Super NES)

1994
King of Dragons
Eye of the Beholder
MegaMan Soccer
Slam Masters
Knights of the Road
Super Street Fighter II (Super NES/ Megadrive)
Goof Troop
MegaMan 5 (Game Boy)
MegaMan: The Wily Wars (Megadrive)
Great Circus Mystery
Super Street Fighter II Turbo
Breath of Fire 2
MegaMan X2

1995
Bonkers
X-Men: Mutant Apocalypse
Captain Commando
MegaMan 7 (NES)
SF: The Movie
X-Men: Children of the Atom (Saturn)
MegaMan X3
Final Fight 3
Street Fighter Animated Movie Game
Street Fighter Alpha (PlayStation/Saturn)

1996
Street Fighter Alpha (Super NES)
Night Warriors (Saturn)
Warriors of Fate
Resident Evil (PlayStation)
DarkStalkers (PlayStation)
MegaMan X3 (Saturn/PlayStation)

1997
Cyberbots
Street Fighter Collection
MegaMan X4
Marvel Super Heroes
X-Men vs Street Fighter
Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha
Resident Evil (Saturn)
Star Gladiator



1998
Vampire Savior
Pocket Fighter
Resident Evil 2
Rival Schools





▲ At least Capcom is giving us the retro Street Fighter II games in its Generations series. This pack's going to be an ace import purchase!

CAPCOM GENERATIONS #3

Back to basics with this CD, which contains four games. Vulgus and Exed Exes are two extremely old vertical shooters, Son Son is a bizarre scrolling platform game and as for Higemaru... er, we've never heard of it! Quite why these games have been chosen astounds us...







CAPCOM GENERATIONS #4

Our third favourite pack. Capcom was the master of the vertically scrolling shooting game and no more so than in these three titles: Commando, Gunsmoke (a more advanced version of Commando set in the Wild West) and the awesome CP-System 1 shooter, Mercs!







CAPCOM GENERATIONS #5

One might consider this the ultimate fighting retro pack. This contains the epoch-making Street Fighter II along with its sequels Champion Edition ("be" the bosses) and the still incredible Street Fighter II Turbo: Hyper Fighting (new moves and extra speed!). To coin a phrase, "awesumnal"...





Mini Gems



With two 4MB titles under its belt, Capcom expands its Saturn roster this month with yet another cracking coin-op conversion. This time the focus is on a bunch of cutesy characters guaranteed to bring a smile to even the most miserable old gamer's face! MATT YEO gets sickly sweet.





▲ (Above) Although initially hidden, select Gouki and Dan by moving the flashing cursor either left or right.

Capcom has the distinction of being one of the few developers to truly think ahead when it comes to videogames. The company's latest coin-ops are usually tantalising glimpses at what console titles to expect from the mighty king of 2D beat 'em ups in the months ahead. Now, with the advent of the memory-boosting 4MB cart, the age of perfect arcade conversions is finally upon us.

No longer will we have to contend with such 'serious' issues as appaling loading times, cutdown sprite animation and horrendous 10 frames per second action... well, at least that's the idea. Of course all this gaming loftiness is pretty much redundant when talking about Pocket Fighter as the emphasis here is really on all-out belly laughs!





▲ Sakura shows players the full contents of her wacky wardrobe.



POCKET POWER

Fresh from the arcades (in fact the coin-op is less than a year old), Capcom's latest 2D fighting game represents everything we've come to expect from one of the world's top developers.

Superior gameplay, great characters and that unique Capcom magic that less-talented programming houses will never capture. Although not a huge hit in the arcades, Pocket Fighter still managed to expand and enhance the company's classic 2D fighting techniques as well as giving players the chance to get to grips with miniaturised versions of their favourite Street Fighter, DarkStalkers and WarZard characters. These



▲ Kick miniature ass to gain gems which in turn power-up super moves.



▲ Hey, any game with huge pink dragons in it has to win our seal of approval!



▲ Over-the-top special moves and supers are Pocket Fighter's trademark. Visually, this game is untouchable!



▲ Who's the babe on the frog? Why, it's none other Street Fighter III's sultry ninja, Ibuki.



▲ Keep your eyes peeled for loads of classic Capcom character costumes and cool cameos!





▲ Dan gets to really ham it up in Pocket Fighter, with karaoke singing and an impersonation of 'The King'... Elvis!



▲ Characters retain versions of their standard moves.

diminutive dudes had already made an appearance in Capcom's Tetris-style title, Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo, but now gamers could finally take each other on in comical combat for real!

Powered by the company's trusty old CP-System II arcade board (still being used to this day with the likes of Street Fighter Alpha 3), Pocket Fighter was an obvious choice for home conversion treatment. Players are familiar with the coin-op's characters, moves and gameplay, and the Saturn has the technology to easily cope with 2D graphics of this quality. Now available on import, Pocket Fighter is truly awesome!

PLAY TO WIN

The great thing about virtually every Capcom beat 'em up is that they all utilise the same basic gameplay. Fireballs, Dragon Punches and charging attacks are standard as are blocking techniques and the ability to power-up special moves. Pocket Fighter features all of these... and much, much more. For starters, the game uses just three buttons: Punch, Kick and Special. This makes Pocket Fighter extremely accessible, especially to younger gamers, and also enables players to pull off all sorts of moves with the minimum of finger-tapping. The entire roster of 12 playable characters are also capable of performing the Guard Crush move. This is almost a special move variation, but may be performed at any time and as often as desired by simply pressing the C button. Holding down the Special attack button charges the Guard Crush, allowing players to let rip with a powerful move guaranteed to shower the screen with brightly coloured gems. Ah, yes. Gems. Here's where the fun really starts...





▲ Finish an opponent with a super combo and you're rewarded with this treat...



JEWEL IN THE CROWN

The key to performing special moves and beating opponents in Pocket Fighter lies in collecting gems. These come in three colours (Red, Yellow & Blue) and a variety of sizes. When players attack their foes and successfully land hits, gems are sprayed all over the place. Picking up these jewels increases the size of your characters' special move bars, located at the bottom of the screen. These three gauges constantly rotate and show players what level each move is currently at and handy icons reveal exactly which joypad motions and button presses

Gouki (Akuma)



Even in a super deformed state, Gouki is as hard-as-nails. Tough cookie.

Dan



Watch out for Dan's singing debut, his bizarre twin and Elvis cameo?!

Tabasa



Hilarious cat-related basic moves, magical tricks and dragon attack.

Lei-Lei



Weird and wacky, Lei-Lei is a fighter for more experienced players.

Sakura



Considered by many to be a mere Ryu clone, this cutie still draws a crowd.

Felicia



Nicking costumes from her fellow DarkStalkers, this pussy packs a punch!

GEM SYSTEM

Gems are at the heart of Pocket Fighter, providing players with the means to boost their special move gauges and deplete their opponent's own power supplies. This may be accomplished by performing simple punches and kicks (producing small gems) to all-out Flash Combos and Super Moves resulting in big jewels. A treasure chest appears at the start of every round and always contains a massive gem. Grab it first and you'll definitely have the upper hand!






GUARD CRUSH SYSTEM

A simple and effective way to generate gems. Press the C button and release it for a comical special attack. If it connects, the Guard Crush always knocks gems from your opponent. Holding down the button for longer results in a more powerful attack and a treasure chest packed with goodies. A fully charged Guard Crush is also unblockable.







▲ Cheeky Capcom. Chun-Li launches into a Flash Combo and changes into her Jill Valentine STARS outfit!

are required to perform said moves. Collecting bigger gems obviously fills the gauge up quickly, enabling really powerful supers to be activated. However, it's also worth remembering that enemy attacks will cause your character to lose gems and deplete their super bars.

SUITS YOU SIR!

Pocket Fighter's most appealing qualities are surely its tongue-in-cheek characters and gaudy animation. By miniaturising the game's characters and giving them a big-eyed Manga look, Capcom has been able to run wild with over-the-top moves, hilarious cameo-packed backgrounds and costume changes galore. As in other Capcom 2D beat 'em ups, players are capable of preforming Chain Combos by using strings of punches and kicks. These quick hits add together and cause massive damage, leaving opponents stunned and setting them up for even more moves. However, Pocket Fighter takes this style of combos to new levels by actually having characters switch outfits and costumes with virtually every animation frame! For instance, start a Chain Combo with Zangief and he immediately changes from


▲ Felicia switches to her full, furry Sasquatch outfit.

Ryu



Fireballs, Dragon Punches, Hurricane Kicks... he's the same.

Ken



Just in time for France '98, Ken's footie outfit combo is a real hoot.

Chun-Li



Resident Evil fans, be warned! Chunners wears Jill's togs in this game!!

Zangief



The only character who really seems at home in this game... we like this guy.

Morrigan



Perv alert! Morrigan's nursing outfits are liable to induce drooling!

Ibuki



Fresh from Street Fighter III, this female ninja is a lethal little lovely.



▲ Believe us, we could try and explain what's going on here, but words fail us...



▲ Use collected items to strike opponents from a distance. Here, Ryu gives Zangief a bit of a shock!





his familiar red trunks into a gorilla suit, then a Neanderthal caveman, a Cossack and finally a workman complete with safety helmet and drill! These potentially lethal attacks are not only devastating, but also a real laugh. What's more, Capcom has cheekily swiped costumes from other characters in its gaming library including MegaMan, Resident Evil's Jill Valentine, Phobos from DarkStalkers and many more!





▲ Get yourself a copy of this 4MB masterpiece NOW!

MORE MINI MADNESS

Of course, no Capcom home conversion would be complete without a host of exclusive console-only features and Pocket Fighter is no exception. As well as standard Arcade (one player) and Free Battle (two player) options, the game has been bolstered with a handy Training Mode (for practising those Chain Combos) and the Running Battle option. Featuring an all-new backdrop, this is essentially a survival mode allowing players to take on the game's entire cast of characters in a spot of one-on-one fisticuffs. The catch is, you only have one bar's worth of energy and your opponents are rock-hard. By performing specific special moves, players are capable of winning back life energy and proceeding to the next round. It's a warrior's challenge, make no mistake!



The only downside to all this Capcom loveliness is that, for



▲ Capcom's stunning designs and artwork really shine through in Pocket Fighter.

SECRET#1: FIGHT DAN HIBIKI

To face Dan before fighting your boss, you must satisfy at least one of the following conditions:
Don't lose a single round for four or more consecutive battles.
Finish five or less battles with a Mighty Combo.
Finish three or more rounds within 40 seconds.
Finish three or more rounds with 75% or higher health.
Finish two or more rounds with all three deadly techniques at Level 1, while your opponent's techniques are all at Level 3.



SECRET#2: FIGHT GOUKI

To face Gouki before fighting your boss, you must satisfy at least one of the following conditions:
Don't lose a single round.
Finish six or more battles with a Mighty Combo.
Finish two or more rounds within 20 seconds.
Finish two or more rounds with 90% or higher health.
Finish two or more rounds with all three deadly techniques at Level 3, while your opponent's techniques are all at Level 1.



FLASH COMBOS

One-two hit combos are common in all beat 'em ups, and Pocket Fighter is no exception. However, by tapping the correct punch and kick combinations, it's possible to string multiple hits together, which result in your character performing all manner of wacky costume changes. These Flash Combos are real crowd-pullers and always good for a laugh.



COLLECTABLE ITEMS

There are a number of items to pick up, some of which are contained within Treasure Chests and others are supplied by floating carriers. These extras include life-boosting food, Rainbow Gems and Item Balls. Player s hold up to two balls at a time and throw them at opponents by pressing Kick + Special. Here's the full list of items on offer and what affect they have:

Honoo - Foe is burned.
Koori - Opponent is Frozen
Doku - Poisons enemies.
Bakudan -Powerful long-range bomb.
Banana - Foes slip and slide.
Sekika - Turns opponents to stone.
Kaminari - Shocking lightning attack.
Burger - Food replenishes energy.









▲ When activated, supers hit with real force and dislodge plenty of handy gems.

some inexplicable reason, the game's loading times are appaling. What happened? X-Men vs Street Fighter and Vampire Savior were almost mistaken for cartridge games, such was their speediness. Surely the whole point of using the 4MB cart is to ensure arcade perfect animation and zero loading times? Starting a game in Pocket Fighter results in prolonged periods of staring blankly at a logo screen wondering exactly what it is that the 4MB cart is actually doing. Still, I guess you can't win 'em all...





▲ Check out M Bison sledging and two Bishamon's in an igloo! Worra laff!

SECRET#3: MORRIGAN'S POSES

Win the final round of a battle with a full energy bar, then input the following code: U + Punch + Special. If you're fighting Dan, Chun-Li, or Sakura, she'll do imitations of their win poses. If fighting anyone else, Morrigan performs her old taunt from Night Warriors.

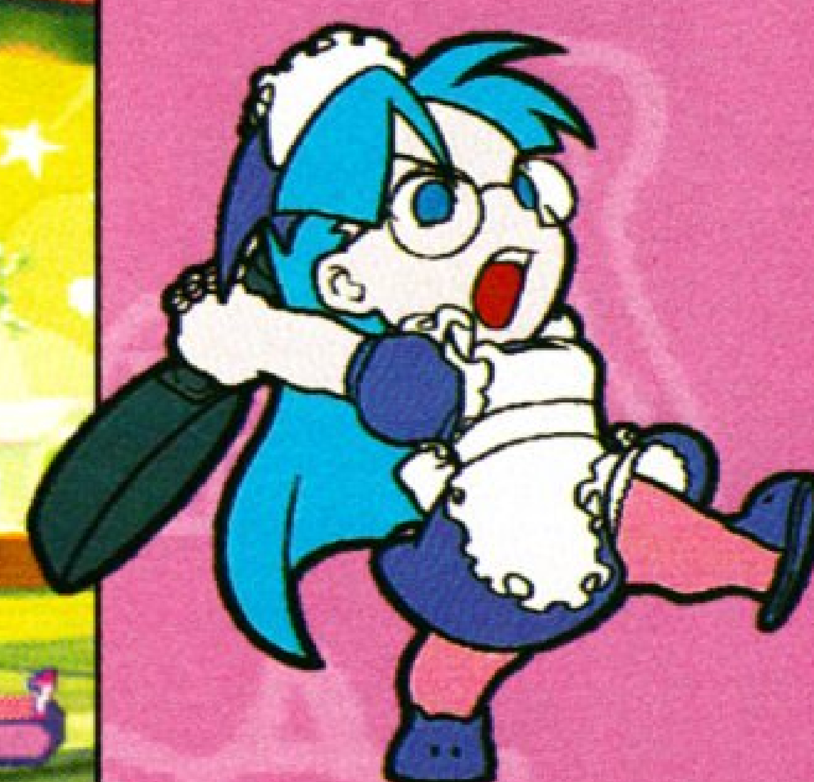








▲ "Now hold still, you'll just feel a small prick..." Heh, heh.





ISSUE #4 FEB 96
Reviewed: Wing Arms, FIFA '96, Virtual Golf, Johnny Bazookatone, Toshinden, Cyberia, Casper, D, True Pinball, World Cup Golf. Showcases: Vampire Hunter/Street Fighter Alpha, D and all the secret cheats of Sega Rally! Plus Panzer Zwei AND part one of the VF2 Masterclass!



ISSUE #5 MAR 96
Reviewed: X-Men: Children of the Atom, Darius, Baku Baku Animal, NFL Quarterback Club, Hang On '96, Titan Wars. Showcases: Euro '96, Legend of Thor, Street Fighter Alpha, X-Men, Guardian Heroes, Panzer Zwei! Plus: VF2 masterclass and Sega Rally guide!



ISSUE #6 APR 96
Reviewed: WipEout, Magic Carpet, Street Fighter Alpha, Shellshock, Valora Valley Golf, Shining Wisdom, Gex. Showcases: Magic Carpet, Gun Griffon, MK3, Panzer Zwei, DarkStalkers/Vampire Hunter. Plus: VF2 Masterclass part three AND a cool WipEout guide.



ISSUE #7 MAY 96
FREE! REVIEW AND TIPS BOOK! And! NiGHTS revealed! Reviews: Euro '96, Panzer Zwei, Defcon 5, The Horde, Nightwarriors/Vampire Hunter, Revolution X, Alone in the Dark 2. VF2 masterclass: the penultimate edition. WipEout guide part two, plus all the X-Men moves too!



ISSUE #8 JUN 96
Heart of Darkness featured... and it's still not out! Reviewed:Guardian Heroes, Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3, In the Hunt, Discworld, 3D Lemmings. Showcases: Panzer Zwei final, NiGHTS, Guardian Heroes final update. Full detailage on top games still worth buying today!



ISSUE #9 JUL 96
Full E3 report with first Cop 2 coverage! Reviewed: Loaded, Need for Speed, Shockwave Assault, Big Hurt Baseball, Blackfire, WWF, Striker, Virtual Open Tennis, Ghen War. Showcases: Sonic X-Treme (now canned!), VF Kids, Exhumed, Space Hulk and of course NiGHTS!



ISSUE #12 OCT 96
Daytona CCE revealed! Reviewed: WorldWide Soccer '97, Fighting Vipers, Actua Golf, Destruction Derby, Blam! Machinehead, Bubble Bobble Pack, Highway 2000. Also included: Awesome NiGHTS guide that will blow you away. And! The dread arrival of The Master!



ISSUE #13 NOV 96
Amazing Street Fighter Alpha 2 coverage! Reviewed: Street Fighter Alpha 2, World Series Baseball 2, Tomb Raider, Earthworm Jim 2, Impact Racing. Showcases: Vipers part 2 plus programmer interview, Tomb Raider. Plus: tips to get you all the way through Exhumed!



ISSUE #14 DEC 96
World's First Virtua Cop 2 Review! Also reviewed: Daytona CCE, Amok, Street Racer, Hardcore 4x4, Chaos Control, Three Dirty Dwarves, Blazing Dragons, Crimewave, PGA Golf '97. Showcases: Cop 2, Christmas NiGHTS, Daytona CCE. Lobotomy Software interviewed!



ISSUE #15 JAN 97
COVER CD WITH VIRTUAL ON, DAYTONA CCE, WORLDWIDE SOCCER, TOMB RAIDER! Reviewed: Virtual On, Blast Chamber, NHL Hockey '97, Command and Conquer, Sega Ages, Mighty Hits, Tetris Plus, Breakpoint, Krazy Ivan, Tunnel B1, Madden '97, Jewels of the Oracle.



ISSUE #16 FEB 97
Amazing Fighters MegaMix Coverage! 16 pages of small tips - it's all in here! Reviewed: Sonic 3D Blast, NFL Quarterback Club '97, NBA Jam Extreme, Toshinden URA, Tempest 2000, Batman Forever, Bug Too!, Dark Savior. Showcases: Bug Too! Tomb Raider guide part one!



ISSUE #17 MAR 97
Manx TT Exclusively Revealed! Reviewed: Die Hard Arcade, Crusader, Hexen, Die Hard Trilogy, Grid Run, Andretti Racing, Tilt, Soviet Strike. Showcases: Hexen, Soviet Strike, Fighters MegaMix, Die Hard Arcade. Tips: Tomb Raider part two. Exhumed Team Dolls!



ISSUE #20 JUN 97
Last Bronx Revealed! More Quake! Reviewed: Fighters MegaMix, King of Fighters '95, Pandemonium, Mr Bones, Mechwarrior 2, Scorcher, Shining the Holy Ark. Showcases: Pandemonium, Mechwarrior 2, Shining Holy Ark! Tips: MegaMix, Die Hard part three, Hexen part one.



ISSUE #21 JUL 97
WipEout 2097! Resident Evil/Marvel Super Heroes exclusive! Reviewed: Jonah Lomu Rugby, Battlestations, ID4, Actua Soccer Club Edition, The Crow. Double AM3 interviews: arcade Top Skater, Last Bronx! Tips: Shining Holy Ark part one, MegaMix part three, Hexen part two!



ISSUE #22 AUG 97
Sonic R revealed! Special E3 Report! Reviewed: Sonic Jam, Dark Light, Dragon Force, WipEout 2097. Previews: Quake, Marvel Super Heroes! Showcased: Dragon Force, Last Bronx, WipEout 2097, Huge Resident Evil guide! Tips: Hexen Final Part, Shining the Holy Ark 2.



ISSUE #23 SEPT 97
Marvel Super Heroes exclusive! Reviewed: Resident Evil, Warcraft II, Williams' Greatest Hits, Discworld 2. Previews: Touring Car, Grandia, Croc, Salamander Deluxe Pack! Showcased: MSH, Resident Evil, ThunderForce V, Last Bronx. House of the Dead Interview. Final Shining guide!



ISSUE #24 OCT 97
Panzer Saga exposed! Reviews: Duke Nukem 3D, Last Bronx, Marvel Super Heroes, Frankenstein. Previews: SWWS '98, Quake, Formula Karts. Showcased: Croc, Duke Nukem 3D, Marvel Super Heroes. Coming Soon: Sonic R, Silhouette Mirage. Guides: Last Bronx, Resident Evil and Wipeout!



ISSUE #25 NOV 97
Sonic R. Reviews: Worldwide Soccer '98, John Madden '98, Street Fighter Collection & Bust-A-Move 3. Showcases: Quake, Touring Car plus Lobotomy Interview and DeathTank revealed for the first time! Tips: Last Bronx part two, Last Bronx part two and Marvel Super *Villains*!



ISSUE #28 FEB 98
Winter Heat showcase, 1997 retrospective and the 50 best Saturn games... ever! Massive Panzer Saga coverage begins too! Previews: Shining Force III, Bubble Symphony, Vandal Hearts. Reviewed: FIFA '98, NBA Live '98, EA NHL '98, Rampage World Tour, Tipped: Quake part two, Duke part three, Touring Car.



ISSUE #29 MAR 98
EXCLUSIVE new machine news and Sega Rally 2 coverage! Showcases on House of the Dead, Burning Rangers, Bomberman Fight! Panzer Saga and Grandia. Previews: DJ Wars, Zap '98, Shining Force III, Real Bout Fatal Fury Special. Reviewed: Winter Heat, Sega NHL '98. Tipped: MK Trilogy moves list, Quake part three, Croc part one.



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World League Soccer revealed! Huge House of the Dead and Burning Rangers showcases, special import game review section. Previews: Z, Atari Greatest Hits, Power Drift, Gun Griffon II. Reviewed: X-Men vs Street Fighter, Panzer Dragoon Saga, Chill. Tippage: Grandia walkthrough part one, Croc part two, Quake part four.



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ACE COVER CD: DISC ONE OF PANZER SAGA! Showcases: Radiant Silvergun, Z, WLS '98, Bomberman Wars. Previews: Dragon Force II, Shining Force III (part two), Three Wonders. Reviewed: Burning Rangers, House of the Dead, Z, Whizz, Atari Classics. Guides: Panzer part two, Grandia 2, Croc 3.



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Radiant Silvergun ✓!!!

Everybody wants to borrow Radiant Silvergun, and those lucky few we trust with our precious copy have all formed the same conclusion - it's one of the greatest ever made. GARY CUTLACK tells you why...

As Sega Europe stands with a shaky finger poised nervously over the power switch, ready to turn off the life-support machine that's been keeping the Saturn clinging desperately on to life in the UK, the situation in Japan couldn't be more different. Both Saturn and PlayStation are creaming the N64 in the all-important Japanese market, with Sega's chunky console being home to some of the finest software releases we've ever seen. Case in point: Radiant Silvergun, of which those lucky Japanese are, at this very moment, enjoying the Saturn version in all its divine glory. And unless you own an import-friendly switched Saturn, you won't get the chance to play it at all - even more of a shame considering it's one of the best shoot 'em ups ever made!





▲ Furious enemy attacks, ace gameplay and some of the best graphics the Saturn has ever produced!







▲ This boss races up a skyscraper, calling-up new sections to replace destroyed chunks of its weaponry.





▲ The backgrounds are really impressive too.



▲ There he is - fully 3D, and probably the hardest end-game boss ever!



▲ The sides of this ship crash in, leaving only a tiny safe area to sit in.

>> We now have the complete game, along with the okay from Treasure to expose the final levels of their ace blaster, PLUS we've even translated the plot...

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Sometime in the future, scientists have discovered a strange diamond-shaped alien device deep in space. The mysterious device detonates while being probed, starting a chain reaction that destroys the entire planet. Fortunately, there's a bunch of slap-happy space cadets up in orbit who aren't affected by the blast, so they decide to do something about it - which basically means finding a way to travel back in time to avert the catastrophe before it happens! The game actually starts on level three, with the final level seeing players travel back in time to level one, saving the planet as a result!

WHOOPS, THERE GO MY LASERS!

Radiant Silvergun is something of a major skill-test all the way through, with even the first level seeming near-impossible to sur-

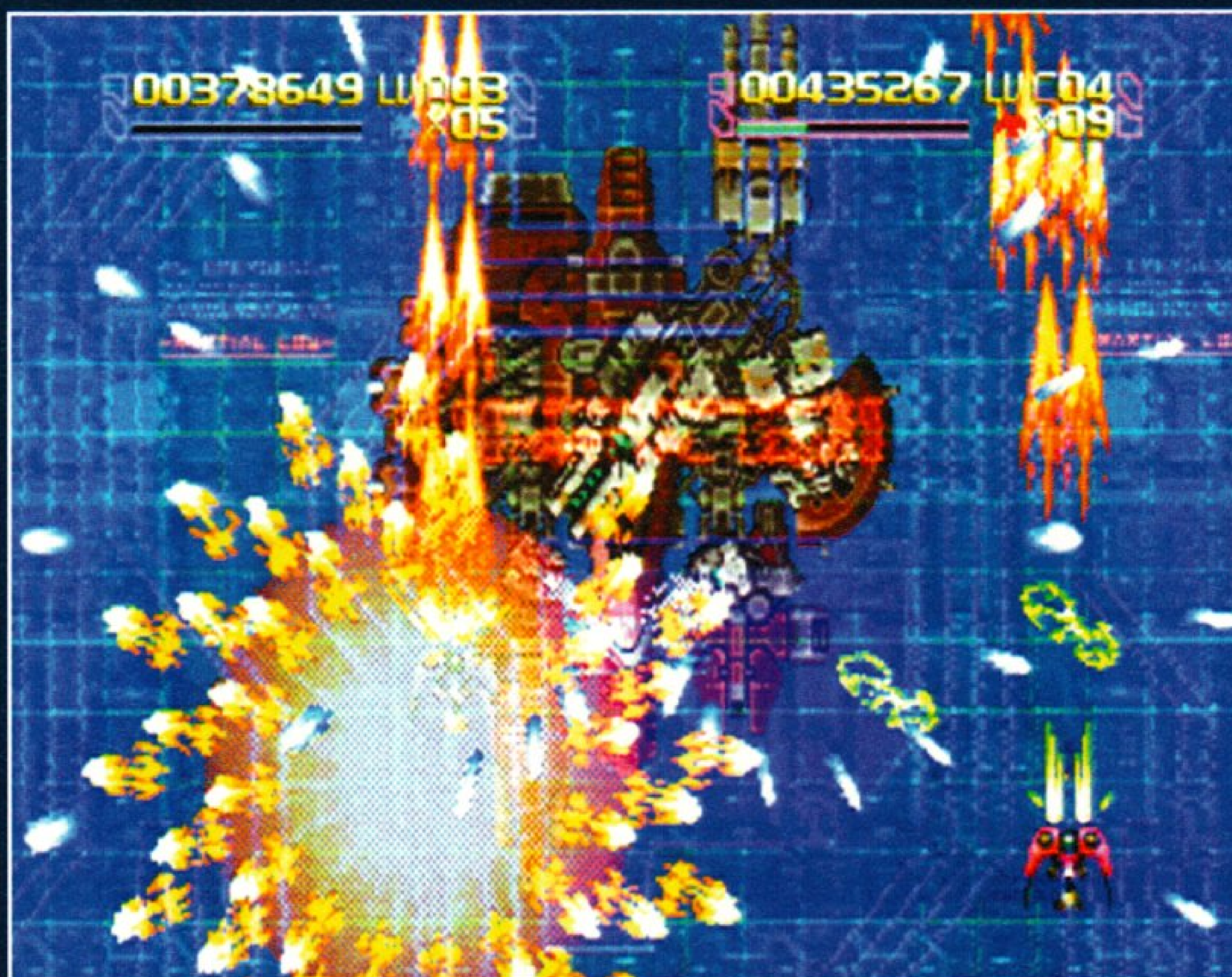


▲ In one beautiful alternate reality, there's a Saturn in every home in the UK, and Sega Europe is preparing to release Radiant Silvergun, officially, next Friday. Aah, if only... eh, readers?



▲ Those five things are about to fire some huge lasers.

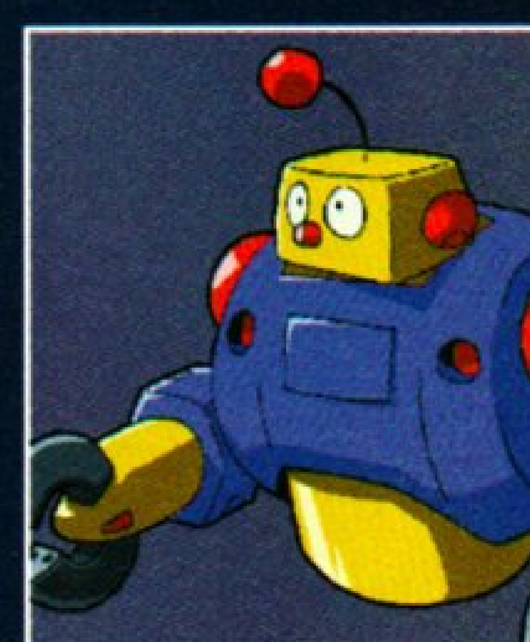

▲ There is a little bit of slowdown in two-player mode.














▲ There's a fine cast of supporting characters, all of who send advice and communications between each other at the end of a level. Cheers mates!

vive at first. And it gets harder too, especially when you start purposefully NOT shooting enemies to gain extra points... see how the enemies come in either red, blue or yellow? This allows for one of the most innovative features in Radiant Silvergun - chain bonuses. Once you've mastered a particular level, and are able to scoot through it without too much trouble (a huge task in itself), the next time you play it becomes an extra challenge to go for massive point bonuses by only killing one colour of enemy. Yes, it makes completing the levels much more difficult, but it's this classic Treasure-esque extra touch which gives Radiant Silvergun its unfeasibly large replay factor. Add to this an extra option menu containing five '?' icons to be unlocked by collecting stray dogs hidden throughout the game and it's safe to say that Treasure is showing the same high quality, spaced-out talents it always has.



DOG MASTER MODE!

The Dog Master bonus section is a great idea, standing out like a plump little cherry sitting proudly on top of the gorgeous Radiant Silvergun-flavoured cake. While playing through the game, you start to notice small dogs appearing (and barking at you!). These signify that you've just shot a special area in the scenery with the lock-on homing plasma (the only weapon which locates the dogs), qualifying for a nice point bonus. There's even a special section in the option screen dedicated to this Dog Master thingy, with the game counting how many dogs you've found and rating your performance too! Collecting more of the doggies hidden throughout the game opens up yet more secrets in the 'Option Plus' menu - so far we've opened a slow motion mode and a level select thanks to finding those dogs and completing the game on Arcade Mode. It's a monster challenge to concentrate on just staying alive, let alone collecting all these bonus barkers, but it's great to see a shoot 'em up with so many options and fun-extending features in these days heavy with one-dimensional over-too-quick games.

GRADIENT? SUPERFUN!

The difficulty level is so perfectly tuned that the game doesn't feel the need to confiscate your weapon power-ups when you die. In fact, the weapon levels even remain the same if you continue, removing the old-style unfair technique employed by many shoot 'em ups of totally wiping you out the first time you make a mistake. And uniquely, it's even possible to save your power levels to memory when you die, allowing you to begin your next game with much more powerful weapons right from the start, making cruising through those early levels an easier task. It's a sign of Treasure's huge confidence in the game's design that it's included this feature, and like everything else in here, the designers have got it absolutely spot on.



▲ The game lets you save your power levels to memory when you die...



▲ ...meaning it's possible to play the first level whacked-up to full power!



▲ More nightmare bullet-dodging is required here. And everywhere else too.







▲ Players are protected from damage when the Radiant Sword is used.



>> **LEVEL 42**

Radiant Silvergun also contains a slightly confusing multiple route system, where it's possible to take two different routes through the game, each with one different (and huge) extra level. Even more confusing is the way players start the game on level three, with your performance against the end boss dictating whether the next level played is level two, or a choice between levels two and four. If you beat the level three boss quickly, it's straight on to level two then on to level five - completely bypassing level four altogether. Play poorly against the level three boss and a level select appears, allowing you to pick either level two or the extra-hard fourth level, before joining the route again at level five. Told you it was a bit confusing, but it's another example of the way Treasure has jammed loads of great extras into this ace game.

2 UNLIMITED

Like all of the classic blasters of old, Radiant Silvergun sparks into life even more in the two-player mode. The way weapon power-ups are rewarded through experience and use helps too, as the usual squabbles about who gets the icons are done away with. The number of on-screen enemies remains the same, although the bosses take more damage to kill as a way of compensation. Apart from that though, the two-player mode is identical to the solo game, with no extra moves, co-operative attacks or anything radically different. To be honest, we were expecting a little more in the way of two-player mode innovation here, but it's still a damn-fine two-up blaster, even without any specific enhancements.


▲ The blue plasma locks on to individual sections.


▲ This boss appears on level four, and is rock-hard.


▲ This snake-like boss rolls into a ball to protect itself.

NIGHTMARE AT 40,000 FEET!

So, it's a Treasure game, that must mean that there are some incredible bosses, right? Damn right! Each level contains at least four shape-shifting ultra-blasters, with some of the most scary and downright nasty attacks going. The final boss, pictured far-right, is immensely difficult, with loads of attacks!









▲ The enemy attacks get even more impressive as you progress.



▲ Has there ever been a shoot 'em up that's been such a thorough test of both human skills and the Saturn's processing power? Put simply, no. Radiant Silvergun is awesome to see and play.



▲ Collect the hidden dogs to open loads of extra options and secrets!

BULLET-DODGING MASTERCLASS

If such a thing existed, Radiant Silvergun would easily win the award for 'Most Bullets On Screen At The Same Time In A Shooting Game'. But these hugely-numbered enemy shots tend to move fairly slowly on the whole, and the collision detection is rather on the generous side too, allowing plenty of jammy "How the hell did I avoid that?!" moments of flukiness. Some of the bigger boss fights do suffer from a bit of slowdown in places, especially in the amazingly packed two-player mode, but has there ever been a shoot 'em up that didn't feature the odd flicker and glitch? For the hardcore shooter fan, successful slowdown management is a very important skill! And considering the stratospheric level of what the Saturn is being asked to produce here, surely the old chap can be forgiven the odd lapse?





▲ Both ships have identical weapons – blue for player one, red for player two.



▲ In the middle of the Radiant Sword it says 'shield' – you're protected.

AND THEN THERE ARE THE GRAPHICS...

So Treasure's got the gameplay sorted out, that only leaves the graphics to worry about. For a company so adept in producing 2D games, we were intrigued to see how Treasure would fare in the brave new three-dimensional frontier. But it's mastered the Saturn, and mastered it well, with Sega's black box obediently displaying unbelievable amounts of action, pulsating, spinning, super-colourful backgrounds and massive 3D bosses, while also coordinating the seven spectacular weapons that your ship fires. The lightning from the homing plasma gun twists and turns as it locks-on and follows the enemies around the screen, the lock-on plasma produces mini targets which fire curving lasers toward its targets, and, well, everything else looks just as colourful, sharp and hi-res all the way through.



MIST OPPORTUNITIES

And even better, the very first level features a hi-res semi-3D backdrop with another layer of, brace yourself, TRANSPARENT mist scrolling over the top! This appears in various other places throughout the whole game, and when one of the multi-chunked >>











▲ Beat the big hi-res man to travel back in time to the year 100,000 BC, where there's a huge...



... test to be faced, with this sixty-second bullet-survival session to complete the game. It's hard.



▲ Level five takes place in a huge mothership, with moving gun posts, rockets and sides which crush you in the middle.





>> 3D bosses swoops into view over the top of this lot, it all looks way too cool for this to be a Saturn game... but it is! And these backgrounds move around all of the time too, spinning and scrolling through 360 degrees, all in hi-res, and all featuring bucket-loads of colour and special effects. A huge battle up the side of a skyscraper is one of the highlights, along with just about everything else.

ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS BC

The final boss isn't a gigantic space mega-cruiser, or even a planet-sized mothership - it's just a big man! Only this big man is REALLY huge, and swoops around the hypnotic perspective-shifting background like you wouldn't believe, throwing frighteningly high amounts of laser in every direction. After that there lies the hardest challenge ever posed in a shoot 'em up, which sees you just needing to survive level one (set back in the year 100,000 BC, thanks to the time-travelling device!), as an ever-increasing number of enemy shots (your own weapons are useless in this area) spin rapidly outwards like you're stuck in some kind of psychedelic tumble-dryer of doom. All set to a spooky horror soundtrack-style Gregorian chant music! It is possible, but it requires bullet-dodging



▲ This is what we in the industry refer to as a "Warrior's Grab" – a particularly high quality screenshot.



▲ See how much wider player one's laser is? Use weapons consistently to raise their power and range. Power levels may be saved to memory too.

and concentrating skills of the very highest calibre to do so. Which kind of sums up all of Radiant Silvergun, really.

COMPLAINTS?

About the best we can come up with is the way that enemy shots are sometimes obscured by your own fire, such is the girth of the power your ship produces, meaning that it's occasionally necessary to stop shooting and concentrate purely on dodging bullets. But that's not much of a complaint really, and to pick out such a tiny thing in a game of this magnitude illustrates just how right everything else is. The lack of any extra-special features in the two-player mode is also a slight disappointment, but this is easily countered by the ace Dog Master feature and the many secret options gained by mastering the game.

LET'S EXAMINE THE EVIDENCE

Radiant Silvergun is an absolutely fantastic game - are you convinced yet? A casual glance at these pictures of Radiant Silvergun well and truly 'in action' should convince you it looks better than any shoot 'em up in existence, and as for the gameplay, well, you'll just just have to believe me when I say that it's up there with the all-time classics of blasting created by 2D specialists of old, such as Irem, Taito, Capcom and Seibu. There are loads of bonuses and extras to discover, making Radiant Silvergun one of the most feature-packed shoot 'em ups we've ever seen too, and it's even really hard, so should suit anyone looking for a hard-core challenge. And if you're STILL not convinced after all that, try turning the page to read another two pages packed with more reasons why you NEED to play and love Radiant Silvergun!



▲ The solution is simple - if you want this game...



▲ ...get your bloomin' Saturn switched NOW!



▲ That's the lock-on plasma in action. This travels through the scenery too, making it the only weapon that's able to locate the hidden bonuses.



▲Each stage is split into at least four separate sub-sections, each with a huge boss at the end.



▲ The final boss is an amazing hi-res creation, and that background rotates 360 degrees too.

BY	TREASURE
RELEASE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	2
HARDWARE	N/A
PRICE	IMPORT
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP

Fully gorged with awesome gameplay and throbbing with some of the best graphics the Saturn has ever produced, Radiant Silvergun is ready to explode in a most spectacular fashion indeed!

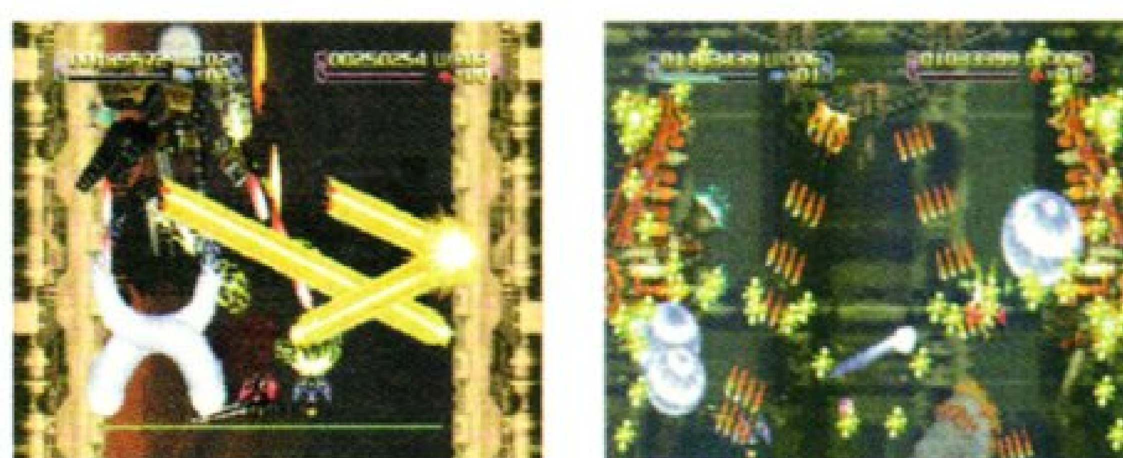
Radiant Silvergun





▲ It's hard to believe how much action there is on-screen.





▲ Some bosses take ages to destroy. That's good!

Ever since Capcom stopped making anything but Street Fighter games, and everyone else found inner peace churning out tedious racing games, the old fashioned 2D arcade blaster which championed gameplay over polygon-pumping action has all but disappeared. Good for us then, that those gameplay perfectionists at Treasure know that great playability still makes the world go round, and even better, it's saved its best for the Saturn.

And boy, Radiant Silvergun is definitely the very best. We get flooded with Japanese shoot 'em ups every few months, and most of them are rubbish, so when we see that Treasure logo of quality stamped on the front of a CD, it's time to sit up and take notice. Or rather, it's time to fall down in a dribbling heap and thank our lucky stars, because, right out of nowhere, Treasure has revived the flagging shoot 'em up genre with an absolutely storming game, combining its trademark awesome design with some of the most impressive graphics the Saturn has ever managed to create.





▲ (Left) There are loads of bonuses and secrets too.

Visually the game is an outstanding mix of 2D detail and 3D power. Early levels feature hi-res scrolling 2D backdrops, while from level four onwards there are some technically gorgeous 3D effects and set-pieces, climaxing in some of the Saturn's finest ever moments, as giant 3D bosses swoop and zoom over some detailed and speedy backgrounds. It looks great, it really does. The weapon systems are perfect too, with forward fire for power, wide fire for covering both sides of the screen and negotiating tunnels, lock-on plasma for accurately

> [We're talking **hardcore blasting action** here it's the **best Saturn shoot 'em up** by miles!]



▲ The red ship is just about to unleash the gorgeous-looking Radiant Sword special.



▲ Everything glows and pulsates, generally looking incredible. Good work, Saturn!





▲ We're all huge fans of Treasure's games here, and Radiant Silvergun is the latest must-have title from those gaming gods.

SO... YOU WANT TO PLAY RADIANT SILVERGUN, EH?

Of course you want to play it, it's incredible! There are two options for you to take: (a) try to find an arcade with a cabinet and bring a wheelbarrow full of change with you, or (b) get your Saturn switched and buy your own import copy to love and cherish forever. You'd have to be a bit of a loony not to consider option (b), as even if you couldn't care less about how the Saturn import switch works, the simple fact is that there are now far too many ace Japanese-only games to ignore



picking-off specific areas and homing fire for cleaning up the stragglers.

This is also a game with an incredibly high replay value. Thanks to the three colours of enemy and point bonuses for only shooting one colour throughout a level, early and easier parts of the game are given an even more enjoyable slant. When they've been mastered, you find yourself trying to get through levels only shooting the red enemies to gain extra points. Basically, players make the game harder or easier to suit their skill level by going for the insanely difficult bonuses. As a result, Radiant Silvergun actually becomes more fun once you've grown familiar with the attack patterns and levels, which is something quite unique for a shoot 'em up, and gives playing through early levels an extra dimension as they try to grab every hidden item along the way.



Radiant Silvergun also plays really well, with slow enemy bullets, generous collision detection and you even get to keep your weapon power levels when you die. But it's still amazingly tough, with absolutely heaps of bullets, massive bosses with screen-filling laser attacks and a huge range of standard enemies to tackle in between. You want secret stuff? Try chain bonuses, Dog Master Mode, multiple paths, weapon bonuses and entire secret levels and bosses to find. There are RPGs out there with less depth than Radiant Silvergun!

It's a great game, it really is. The best shoot 'em up on the Saturn by miles. Ace gameplay, great weapons and control, and it's all nicely topped-off with some consistently amazing graphics that the Saturn just shouldn't be able to do. If I could have one wish, it would be to magic a copy of this into the home of every Saturn owner in the world, as Radiant Silvergun is one of the smoothest, coolest and best-looking shooters ever made. And in one final and heart-warming twist of fate, it's only available on the Saturn. I can find no fault with this game.

GARY CUTLACK



▲ The Radiant Sword absorbs those pink bullets.





▲ (Left) There are loads of bonuses and secrets too.

GRAPHICS	Outstanding bosses, hi-res 2D and 3D backgrounds, great special effects, lovely weapons - it's just plain gorgeous.	96%
SOUND	Some kind of futuristic space-opera, along with loads of Japanese speech from your co-pilots. Strange, but cool.	92%
PLAYABILITY	Seven weapons to learn, but you need 'em all to master the game. Far too many other great touches to list here.	95%
LASTABILITY	It's tough to begin with, but add in the bonuses and secrets to make it one of the biggest gaming challenges there is.	94%

OVERALL

We're not joking, Radiant Silvergun is the best shoot 'em up on the Saturn and one of the greatest blasters ever made!

95%

▼ Radiant Silvergun is the perfect combination of Treasure's coding genius and the Saturn's technical skills.



BY	CAPCOM
RELEASE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	2
HARDWARE	4MB
PRICE	IMPORT
STYLE	BEAT 'EM UP

The Capcom juggernaut keeps on rolling this issue with the Japanese release of Pocket Fighters. Fresh from the arcade and powered by the 4MB cart, this tiny terror takes the Saturn by storm!

Pocket Fighters



CAPCOM CHARACTER FEST!

One of Marvel vs Capcom's greatest features was the sheer volume of obscure and classic characters hidden in the game's 2D backdrops. Pocket Fighter is no exception as Capcom has crammed super deformed faces all over the place! Keep your eyes peeled for such visual treats as the Super Street Fighter II Turbo crew eating at a sushi bar, M Bison sledging, Blanka and Vampire Savior's Rikuo enjoying a day at the beach, Balrog and BB Hood Christmas shopping, Dee-Jay's bar and WarZard's Leo taking a quick nap. See how many cameo characters you can find!



▲ Street Fighters retain all of their original moves.

The main problem with Capcom's coin-op and console games is that, try as you might, you just can't fault 'em. In the hands of other less-talented developers, the likes of Marvel vs Street Fighter or Vampire Savior could well have been laughable (remember Acclaim's 16-bit super hero titles?). But Capcom is the undisputed master of the 2D beat 'em up.

That's why Pocket Fighter is such a joy to play. Yes, the game's super deformed characters and sickly sweet appearance may well induce gagging sensations, but Capcom's talents have always shone through in the gameplay department. Not that Pocket Fighter is a visual letdown of course. In fact, thanks in no small part to the powerful 4MB cart, the game's many frames of animation are well-worth the price of admission alone. Start a combo, with simple punches and kicks, and your chosen character launches into costume change overdrive - switching outfits, clothes and identities like a transvestite on acid. Each of these costume changes is also accompanied by its own over-the-top special attack, with even stony faced fighters such as Ryu and Zangief hamming it up like Laurel & Hardy.



▲ Hilarious costume changes and special moves galore.

However, there's no time to stop and admire the scenery in this pint-sized pummeller, as the action is as fast and furious as any Capcom fighter of yesteryear. Players may make the mistake of presuming Pocket Fighter is just a simplified, kiddie version of other Capcom 2D beat 'em ups, but this error will cost

[With stunning visuals and hilarious, over-the-top characters, Pocket Fighter is a Capcom Classic!]



▲ They may be small, but the Pocket Fighters are a tough bunch of teeny titans!



▲ Even baby Gouki's a playable character.



▲ Ryu falls for an underage Chun-Li.



▲ Check out Felicia's MegaMan outfit!



▲ Lei-Lei's moves are truly weird...



▲ Thanks to Capcom's 4MB cart, the Saturn version of Pocket Fighter perfectly recreates the coin-op's stunning animation.

them dearly. The game plays virtually the same as its big brothers, with the usual array of fireballs, Dragon Punches and special moves on offer, providing a feeling of familiarity and ensuring players won't have to learn 101 new button combinations. That's not to say that Pocket Fighter is without its own unique gameplay features. In fact, it's the addition of the Gem system, Mighty Combos, Special Throws and Mega Crush that give this title its real appeal. Street Fighter fans will easily get to grips with the game's basics, but the chance to learn new techniques and combat techniques is always welcomed.



Likewise, the ability to pick up and hurl items at opponents is also much appreciated, requiring players to block ridiculous energy-sapping icons while still keeping their eyes peeled for incoming sneak attacks. Some gamers may choose to ignore the item system, claiming it's just a way of getting a few cheap hits in, but if it gets the job done and looks cool... who cares?

Pocket Fighter also contains console-only features, ensuring the game's longevity once you've whupped Arcade mode. Training and Running Battles provide players with opportunities to hone their skills to perfection or face a real challenge by tackling the game's entire roster of characters with only a dwindling energy bar and fighting experience ensuring victory. This is a warrior's option, to say the least!

Wrap this package in a candy-coated shell and Pocket Fighter is yet another Capcom winner. Okay, so it's not as instantly accessible as X-Men vs Street Fighter or as gory as Vampire Savior, but if this is any indication of the quality of forthcoming 4MB coin-op-to-console conversions, we're gagging for more of the same!

MATT YEO

PUZZLE FIGHTER VS POCKET FIGHTER

Capcom first dazzled us with its combination of super deformed combatants and gem-based action in last year's Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo. Basically an enhanced version of the classic Tetris formula, players attempted to drop jewel blocks on each other in an effort to unleash miniature Street Fighter attacks. It was a minor Saturn hit, but what players really wanted was the chance to pit their favourite pint-sized heroes against each other for real. Guess what? A year later and your prayers have been answered. Who says Capcom doesn't give gamers what they want?!









▲ Bizarre outfits and moves make Pocket Fighter a treat.

GRAPHICS	4MB powered visuals deliver silky smooth frames of animation and some truly hilarious costume changes.	**95%**
SOUND	Suitably cute BGM and sound effects perfectly complement the game's tongue-in-cheek sense of humour.	**90%**
PLAYABILITY	As engaging and deep as any 2D Capcom beat 'em up, with extra gameplay features and enhanced options.	**95%**
LASTABILITY	Arcade and Free Battle modes last for ages, with Training and Running Battle extras adding to the game's longevity.	**94%**

OVERALL

Another cracking Capcom coin-op conversion. Packed with playability and humour, this is an essential import title!

93%

▼ It plays like Street Fighter, looks like Puzzle Fighter and supports the 4MB cart... waddya waiting for? BUY IT NOW!



BY	GAME ARTS
RELEASE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1
HARDWARE	Saturn
PRICE	IMPORT
STYLE	RPG

As revealed last issue, this Museum title is more than just a series of things to look at and go "Oooh!" Grandia Digital Museum contains all-new levels, new bosses... in fact it's a whole new challenge!

Grandia Museum

As regular readers of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE doubtless know by now, we kind of like Game Arts' Grandia. Okay, there's a couple of things that are stacked against it: the fact it's a RPG and more to the point the fact that it's a Japanese RPG with little or no English text. However, any one who has played it will regale you with tales of incredible graphics, sumptuous sound effects, mammoth lastability and unmatchable charm... oh, and indecipherable Japanese text!

A name like 'Grandia Digital Museum' might lead you to think that this is merely a gallery of art and sounds from the original game, but as we explained in last month's preview, this is actually a full-fledged videogame! It's what Grandia fans really want - more levels of their favourite role- playing game along with a bunch of intriguing sub-games and a great history lesson on how this mammoth adventure was created, featuring more gorgeous work-in-progress art than you can shake an excessively large pole at.



Considering that this is "only" a museum you might have imagined that Game Arts would be less concentrated on the quality of this follow-up disc, but the fact is that the excellence of the graphics in this Digital Museum more than matches those in the original Grandia. There aren't any richly detailed townscapes - it's dungeon action all the way - but the bottom line is that the game looks absolutely superb. Another plus with the lack of Japanese text knowledge required. There are one or two sticky areas, but the fact is that the majority of the game is pure action... and that's good.

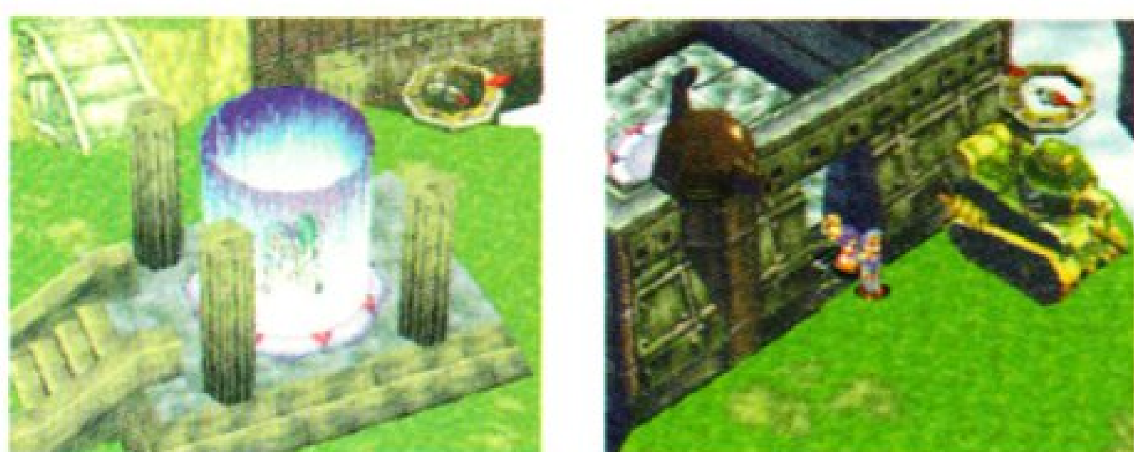
So what's the big idea? As far as we can gather, Grandia Digital Museum is a showcase for the development of one of the greatest adventures ever created. All of the original oil painting artwork and character designs may be accessed along with mini sub-games and what-not, but the catch is that most of the exhibits in the museum have been purloined by forces unknown. It's down to Grandia's main protagonists Justin, Fina and Sue to venture out into unknown territory and find the stolen treasures. It might sound simple, but the fact is that it is not. Although you are instantly gifted with




▲ Some more all-new level action in this fine museum!



▲ The game begins with a quick talk with the purple Riete.



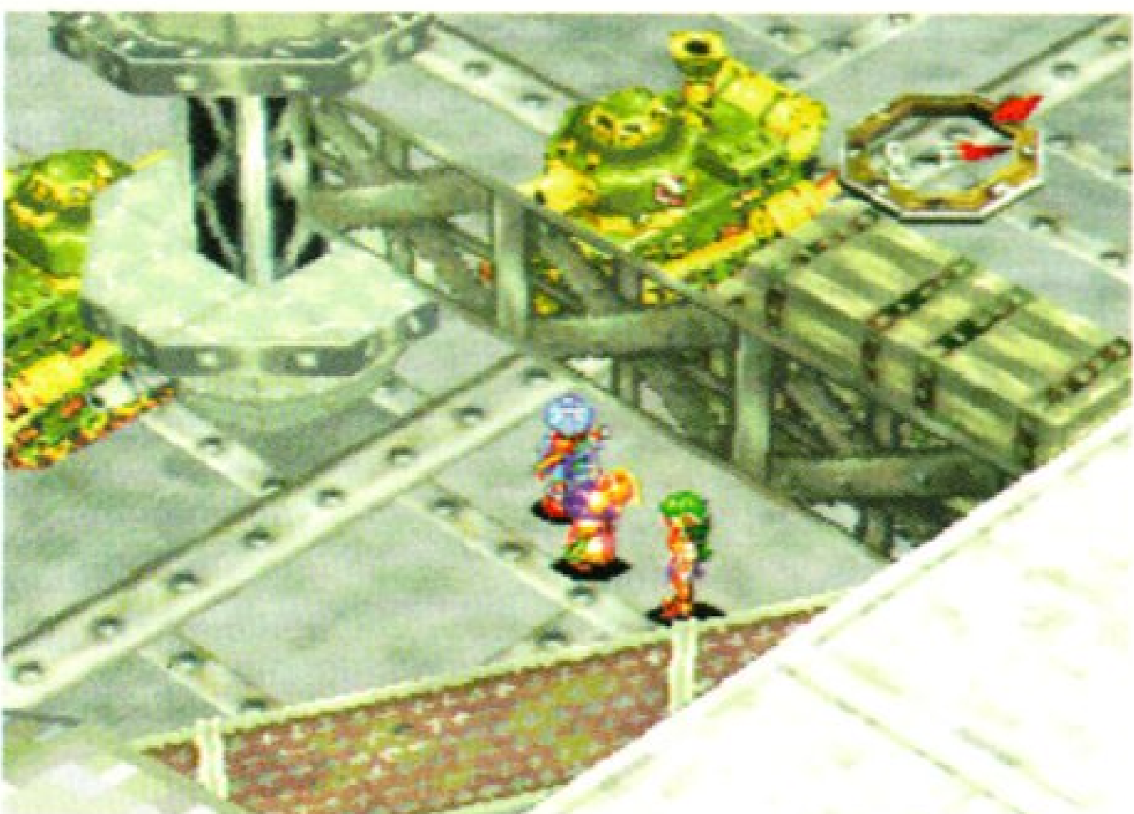
▲ Use the portals (left) to travel between the levels.

MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR

In the original Grandia, the magic system is something of a mystery and mastering it isn't exactly essential in besting the game - basically you can easily beat the game using your characters' physical damage dealing prowess alone! However, the Digital Museum gives players level 25 characters replete with the full range of mystical powers. That being the case, here are a couple of gratuitous shots showing some of the spectacular effects Grandia's magic spells produce. You really need them because the Digital Museum's minions don't take any prisoners...



▲ You can't beat a bit of magic... well, not in Grandia, no.



▲ An all-new Army Base awaits in the new Digital Museum!



▲ Hmmmm... this museum is all well and good, but the real action begins when you leave it to retrieve the treasures.



▲ The fighting can get pretty intense early on the game – you'll need to be good. Very good.



▲ Each of the different style of exhibit has its own room within the museum.





▲ A bit of fighting (left) and a spot of shopping (right).

level 25 characters armed to the teeth with magic, the monsters you face are top-of-the-line meanies... certainly on a par with the creatures you face at the climax of Grandia itself. The artifacts are located in suitably cunning places throughout the dungeons.

This game is just so cool - the dungeon levels of the original Grandia were all fairly straightforward and easy to get to grips with, with simple logic puzzles and plenty of fighting... and Digital Museum is exactly the same!

The bottom line is simple. Those who've played Grandia will get a hell of a lot of fun out of the Digital Museum... seeing how the game came together and at the same time getting more of the same. Those who haven't played the original will find this a lot shorter, but much easier to get into.

Either way, this game is a lot of fun and another great example of an excellent Saturn import purchase.

RICH LEADBETTER



▲ The monsters here are REALLY difficult to defeat...

FIVE YEARS OF PAIN

Grandia originally started life as a Mega-CD product over five years ago - and that's a fact! The Grandia Digital Museum captures the entire design process through its exhibits, allowing you access to the original design sketches as well as galleries of all the finished artwork as it appeared in the game itself. Now that's not too shabby, eh? The fact that you have to play more of the game in order to retrieve all of these prizes is another bonus and actually getting everything takes absolutely ages... so there's some value here!

1


2


3


4


[It's a lot more than a simple novelty - it's an excellent action role-player in its own right!]

GRAPHICS	It might not have the diversity of Grandia, but this museum and its new levels sure look great...	**94%**
SOUND	Nothing new in the aural department – the sound's exactly the same as it was in the original Grandia.	**93%**
PLAYABILITY	Unlike the original, a grasp of Japanese text is not required to progress – it's action/adventure all the way.	**93%**
LASTABILITY	It's not really a fraction of the size of the original Grandia, but there's still ruck loads of gameplay in there regardless.	**86%**

OVERALL

More Grandia, more quality levels! For those of you who own the game, this is a great bonus purchase.

88%

▼ If Lee Nutter was writing the caption to this screenshot, he'd probably use the phrase "Tank-tastic". Worra plum!





SEGA SATURN™ tips

We might have a little change in store for the Tips page next month, nothing major, just a little tinkering to make everything look a little nicer. As you can see, we're still keen on answering all of your gaming problems and tip requests, so keep sending us those tip questions with your letters when you next write in. Send everything to SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE Tips, 37-39 Millharbour, Isle of Dogs, London E14 9TZ. We might even print some arcade tips if you ask...

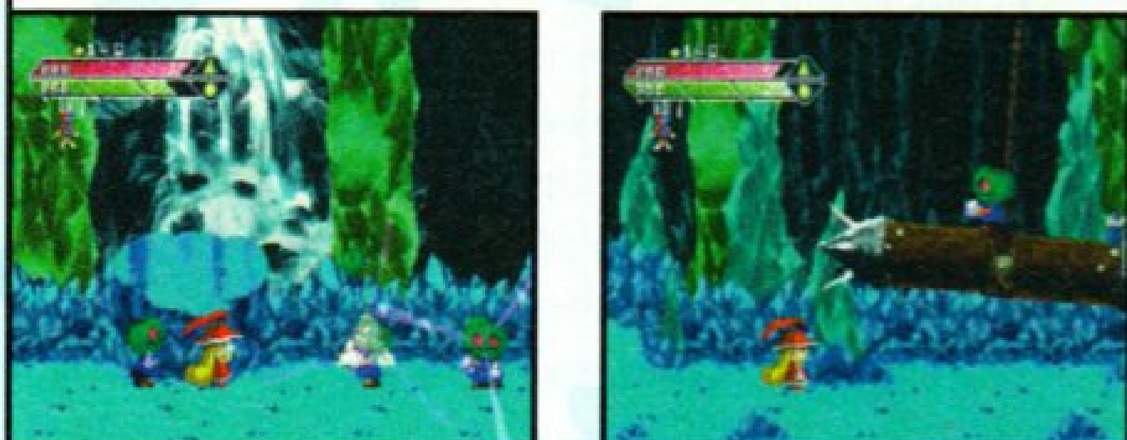
SILHOUETTE MIRAGE



Treasure has just reinvented the shoot 'em up genre with Radiant Silvergun, while late last year it gave the humble platform game a comprehensive makeover with the release of Silhouette Mirage.
Hopefully a few of you bought this classy platformer on import, so try out this cool extra options cheat.

Debug Mode
After the Treasure log appears, press **X + B + Z + Start**. This takes you to a new option screen where the Debug Mode in question becomes accessible. Turn this option on and start a game to be given a level select and 9999 gold, plus a great sprite manipulation feature may then be activated by pausing the game, then **pressing the Left + Right shoulder buttons.** From here it's possible to play with all of the sprite-scaling and technical details that are used in the game! But it doesn't place any limits on what you're allowed to do, so there's a chance it may crash your Saturn in the process, so don't get too carried away. However, do get carried away with the game - it's fantastic!

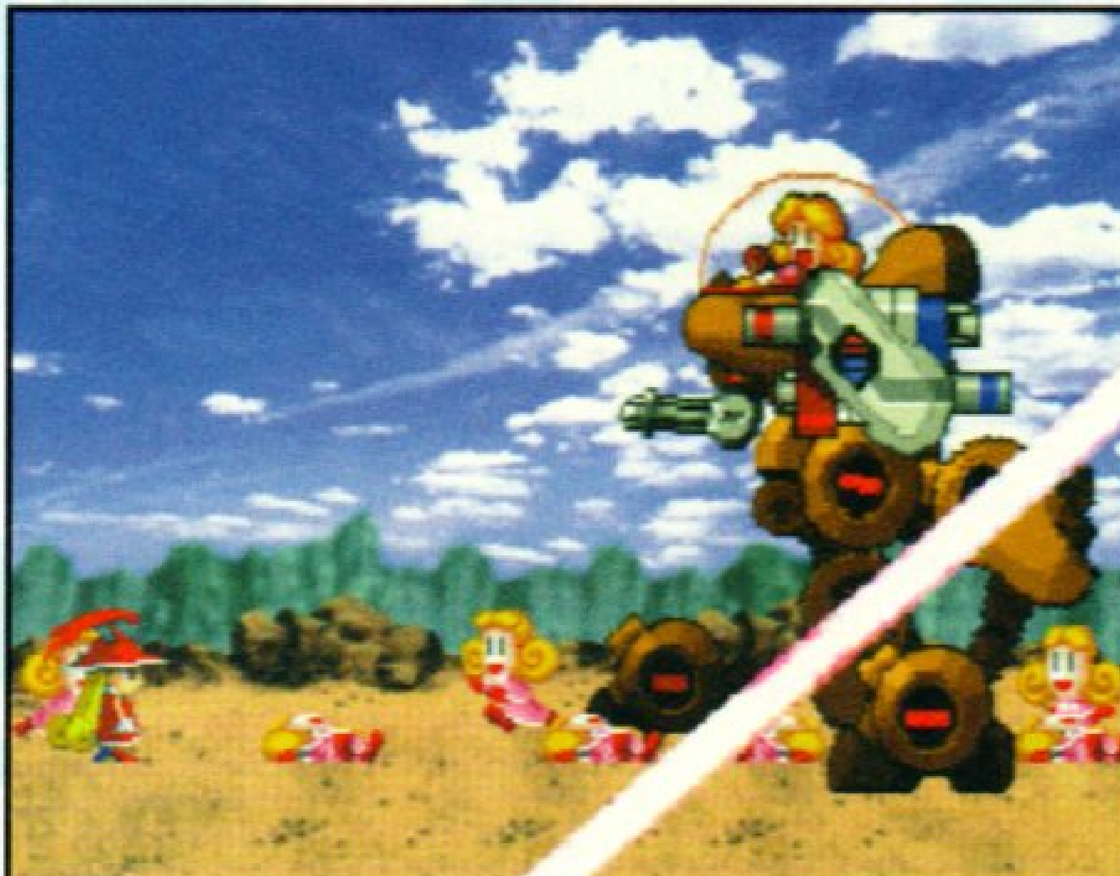
▼ Treasure has enriched our lives beyond measure.







▲ Treasure has moved into semi-3D with Radiant Silvergun.

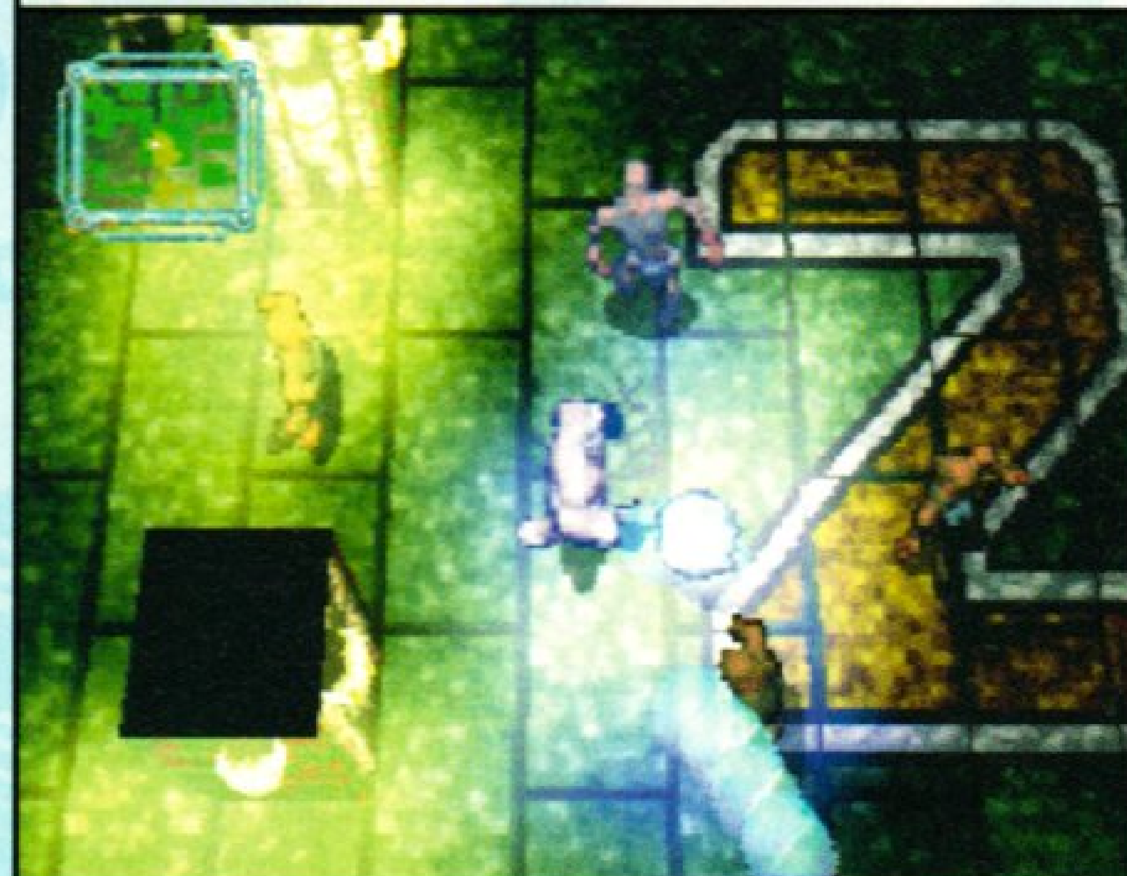


LOADED

Dear SSM,
I desperately need some cheats for Loaded - invincibility, more ammo... anything. Please help!
James Hagerty, Merthyr Tydfil.

A quick search of the SSM Tips archive (a crumpled piece of paper on Gary's desk) reveals the following: **Pause the game and highlight the BGM Volume option.** Press and hold these buttons in order: **Top Left, Z, B, X, C + Top Right.** A special Cheats menu will appear where you may skip levels, increase ammo, power, and lives. Highlight one of the options and **press C** to increase its number.

▼ Loaded has not even remotely enriched our lives.



MANX TT

Dear SSM,
Are there any cheats to spice up Manx TT?
Ben Rogerson, Carlisle.

There are quite a few cheats in Manx TT, as we will now illustrate by printing them right here.



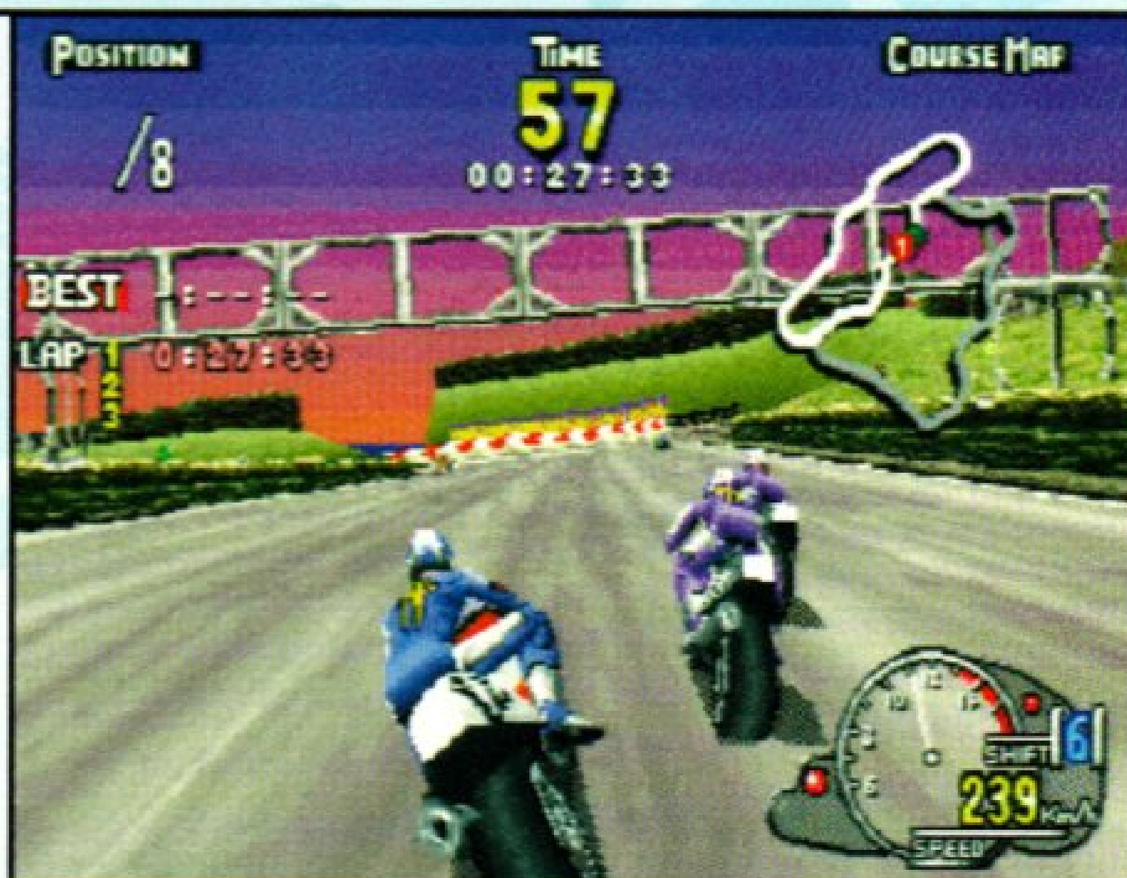
Sheep Mode
At the 'Select Transmission' screen, **press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Z + Y.** When the game begins, all players will be racing on sheep!

Super Bikes
At the Mode Select screen, **press Top Left + Top Right + X + Y + Z** together for a super bike. The timing on this is difficult, so be sure to press all the buttons simultaneously.

Tantalus Bike
On the arcade Transmission Select screen, **press Top Left, Top Left, Top Right, Top Right, Left, Right, Left, Z, Y + Z.** Wait for the time to run out and your racer should have the Tantalus logo on his back.

Music Select
At the main menu **highlight Arcade and hold X+Y+Z.** When you enter Arcade Mode you'll now see the title of the songs at the bottom of the track select screen. Change it to hear your favourite Manx TT tune! Although the sound was our biggest complaint when we reviewed it...





▲ Quite a good game. You can buy it cheap too.

DIE HARD ARCADE

As the poor old Saturn gradually fades out of view, we'll be reprinting some of the codes for the more popular Saturn titles, helping you get the most out of all those 'bargain bucket' games that can be picked up for a tenner these days. Games like the ace Die Hard Arcade for instance.

Extra Subs in Deep Scan
At the main menu, **hold X + Y + Z** and select Deep Scan. Keep these buttons held down, then when the game starts you'll have even more subs. This actually makes the game even more ludicrously easy, so use with caution.

Faster Subs in Deep Scan
At the main menu, **hold X + Y + Z + A + B + C** and select Deep Scan.

Extra round
Have you completed the game in two-player mode yet? If not, try to rope in one of your mates (or your mum) and complete it with both players. Now when the game ends there should be an extra one-on-one battle where the two of you fight over who's going to be the girl's new bodyguard.



▲ Bargain bucket 3D beat 'em up excellence.

Hardcore Mode
At the main menu, highlight Die Hard Arcade, then press and **hold X +Y + Z + B**. You should find that when you start the game will be a little bit harder.



Helicopter Kick
To do the special helicopter kick **press A + B + C** at the same time.

Remixed Soundtrack
While playing, **press X + Y + Z + Start** simultaneously. A new version of the soundtrack will now start playing.

DOOM

We gave Saturn Doom a bit of a hard time back in issue 16, but it's still one of the games that pops-up often in our Tips Q&A letters.



All Weapons
Pause the game and press **B, Y, X, Left, Right, C, X + Z** to give your man all weapons.

Baron enemies
Pause the game and press **Up, Down, Left, Right, X, Z, Y, A, C + B**. to make all enemies barons. They're rock-hard!







▲ Rich gave Doom a measly 56% back in issue 16.



Full map
Pause the game and press **B, B, C, Top Left, B, B, C + Top Right** to display the entire game area.

Show all items and enemies
Pause the game and press **B, B, C, Top Right, B, B, C + Top Left** to display all of the items on the game map.

God Mode
While playing, pause the game and press **Down, Y, X, R, Top Right, L, Top Left + B**.

Level Select
While playing, pause the game and press **Top Right, Top Left, Z, R, Z, L, Z + C**. Now you have access to any stage in the game.





Import Q&A

We're constantly telling you how important it is to get your Saturn fitted with an import switch these days, so thought it might be a good idea to make this mini Q&A section a permanent feature. If you have any questions we don't answer here, send them in and we'll add them to the list. It's dead simple, honest!

Q. Can I use one of those converter cartridges?
A. Yes, but the games will be bordered and slightly slower, plus you miss out on the chance to speed up your existing PAL games - one of the major reasons for getting it done in the first place.

Q. What do I need to get?
A. Make sure you get two switches fitted - one to run games from other countries and an essential 50/60Hz speed switch too. Most companies fit both switches as standard, but some charge extra for fitting both.

Q. What does the 50/60Hz switch do?
A. Japanese and American games all run at 60Hz. Without the speed switch all import games will be bordered and slightly slower on our 50Hz TVs. The speed switch also eliminates the borders and slowdown on poor quality PAL games like Marvel Super Heroes and Sonic R, but only if you have a 60Hz compatible TV.

Q. How do I tell if my TV is 60Hz compatible?
A. Generally, all SCART TVs made in the last 3-5 years will be okay. But if you're unsure, it's a good idea to check with the manufacturers to make sure, or it might be a slight disappointment.

Q. What if my TV can't take a 60Hz signal?
A. You can still play foreign games, but they will have borders (similar in size to those in Sonic R and Marvel Super Heroes). If you're certain your TV can't take a 60Hz signal, it may well work out cheaper for you to just buy a converter cartridge and just settle for playing everything in widescreen mode - the slightly slower gameplay is tough to notice if you haven't played the faster original anyway.

Q. Can I still run UK games?
A. Yes! But with a switch fitted you'll have access to all of those ace Japanese games that we keep raving about - games like Metal Slug, Grandia, Dead or Alive, Radiant Silvergun and the rest.

Q. How much does it cost?
A. Very hard to say - it varies from £25 in smaller shops to an unfeasibly high £48 in Computer Exchange. Shop around, some places also do special package deals on switches if you also buy an import game or two at the same time.

Q. Where can I get it done?
A. There's a handy list of companies printed back in the Matters of Import section, but try looking for local independent shops in your area as well - you won't have to post your Saturn to a stranger.

Castlevainia X Symphony of the Night Players Guide Part One

Konami's 2D platform classic is available on import now... and it's awesome! With a game this huge, you're gonna need a top players guide and that's where our Castlevania X-pert MATT YEO steps in.



BASIC GAMEPLAY
After Death removes his weapons and armour, Alucard's actually a bit naff. With Castlevania X, players are required to locate new items, some of which are situated in certain accessible and inaccessible rooms and some of which are dropped when you beat a monster. By building up weapons, armour and powers, players will be able to tackle any challenge!

WEAPONS
While Alucard's knife is a fairly useless implement, there are more powerful weapons to obtain. Keep a close eye on your Inventory screen to see which weapon you're currently using as it's common for players to pick up a better item, but forget to equip it. Also remember that Alucard has the ability to wield THREE weapons: one in each hand and a secondary weapon.

ITEMS
Try to hold on to the items you collect early on. In later sections of the game they'll prove invaluable. Potions and food are essential for boosting health, and pills take intelligence, defence and other skills to higher levels. Certain magical items open doors and allow access to previously inaccessible levels, while helmets and jewellery provide protection from boss attacks.





▲ Visit the Librarian to buy useful items and trinkets.



JUNCTIONS
At certain points in this guide are junctions and areas that I'll address in future issues. Explore these sections if you can, but rock-hard monsters and impassable barriers make these levels extra-hard. Be patient, I'll get to 'em soon enough...

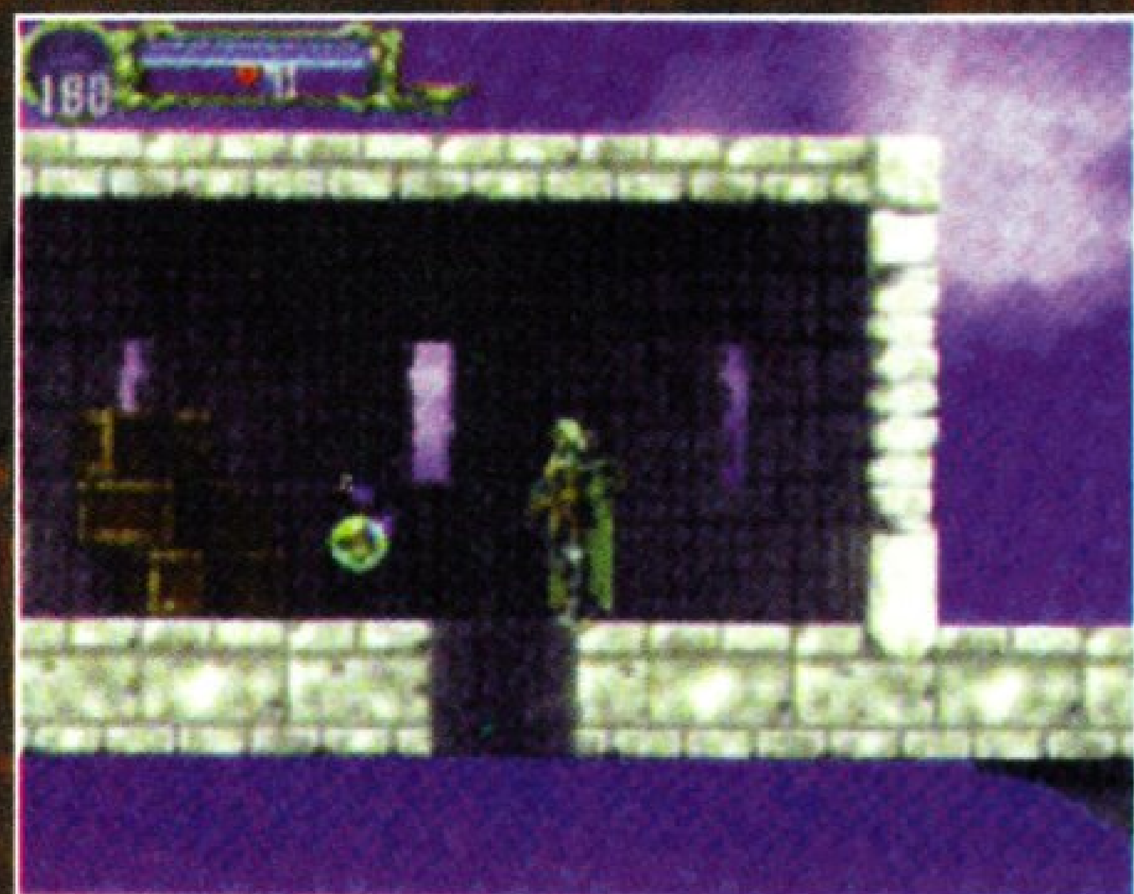
SAVING
I can't stress this enough: SAVE WHENEVER YOU CAN! Remember, Save Stations record your game position and boost health levels back to maximum.





Point 1: Castle Entrance

Once you get the Bat item, fly up to a secret room containing the Wolf 2 item.



Point 2: Entry Hall

There are actually four additional exits to this huge room. The upper left may only be accessed when you gain the Double Jump, Mist or Bat items. The upper right continues through the Entry Hall. The lower right exit may only be accessed via the Groundwater Vein. However, the one you really want is a secret passage in the lower left of the room. To access it, smash a passage through the huge rock formation above and then, when you have the Wolf item, run through it a couple of times. The secret room opens up and contains a vital item you'll need later on.





Point 3: Entry Hall

With the Bat, Mist or Double Jump, reach the middle right entrance in this room to gain a useful sword.





Point 4: Alchemy Lab

The upper left exit contains a hand weapon-filled room, accessible only via the Double Jump or flight powers. This room also leads to the Wolf 3 item. The upper right exit contains a wall and cannon only accessible via the lift in The Marble Gallery. The lower right room contains a Save Station.



Point 5: Alchemy Lab

The upper left exit contains a magical door which may only be opened with a Blue Pendant from the Librarian.



Point 6: Boss Room

Once you can fly, check out the room in the upper right-hand corner for the Demon Card 1.



Point 7: The Marble Gallery

The clock room contains an additional four exits. The left-hand tunnel leads up to Orlox's Room (which is rock-hard!). This entrance opens every few minutes. The upper exit requires flight or Double Jumps to reach a couple of useful items. The right-hand exit may be opened with the stopwatch weapon.





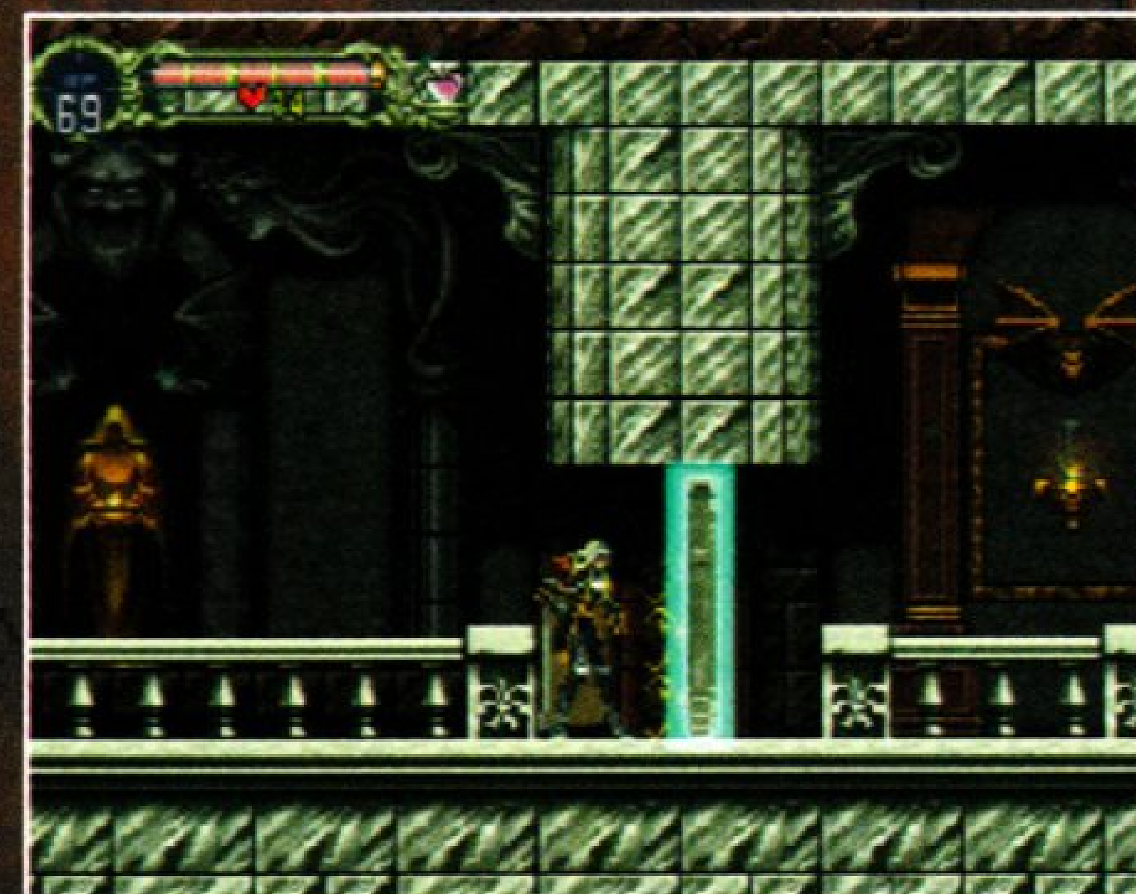
Point 8: The Marble Gallery

With the pink slabs out of the way, this route leads to The Groundwater Vein.



Point 9: The Marble Gallery

Once you have the Blue Pendant, open this door and step on the switch to open the pink slabs.



Point 10: The Outer Wall

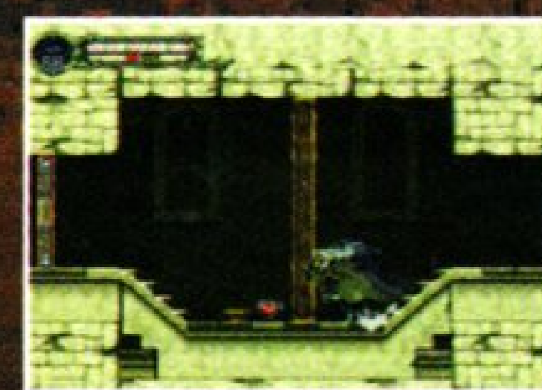
Players may only pass through the door in the lower left of this level with the aid of the Mist item.



Point 11: Entry Hall

Players first encounter this wall in The Entry Hall from the right-hand side. To unblock this wall, step into the transporter in The Outer Wall to be taken to the left-hand side. Pick up the Max Heart icon and then step on the switch to lower the wall. You now have easy access to The Entry Hall from The Outer Wall.





Point 12: The Outer Wall

This door leads to the The Clock Tower, but I'll deal with this tricky section next month.



PROLOGUE

The game opens in the final scene of the SNES game, Castlevania X. You play as Richter and begin on a landing. Climb the stairs to the left. Face right and hack at the rock above you. A button appears. Hit it and climb up the stairs. In the room above, collect all the power-ups. Drop back down and face off against Dracula. Hit his head until he transforms into a horned beast. Don't worry if you die as a young Maria appears and powers Richter up. Beat Dracula and it's on to the game proper.



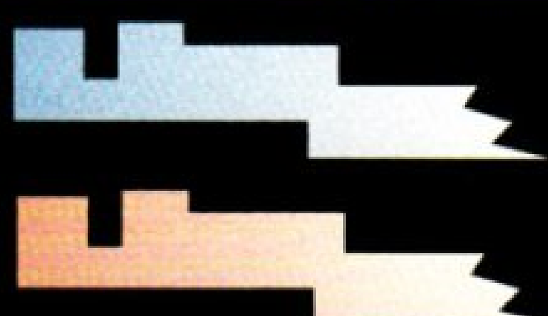


THE ENTRY HALL

You enter the castle fully armoured, but this doesn't last **(P1)**. Proceed to the right, hacking at the Wargs and Zombies in your way. In the next room, with the rock outcrop, smash at the rock wall to gain a food item and create a tunnel through **(P2)**. Head right into the next room and smash the bottom of the stairs on the far right for another food item. In the next room you meet Death who steals all your weapons. BE WARNED! From now on the game gets a lot tougher!







Go right, head up the stairs and go through the door on the left. On the bridge, jump through the gap and float down and left to land on a ledge. In the room to the left is a Max Heart. Go back out the room, drop down and head right to go back up the stairs. This time, jump across the gap in the bridge and through the door on the right. Be careful when attacking the skeleton now that you're armed with a dagger. Three hits will kill him and he'll drop a sword. Don't forget to select it on your Inventory screen **(P3)**.



Head to the middle left door and save. Go back and jump up right to the Materialise Cube. Candles now drop items. Go through the door on the left.



THE ALCHEMY LAB

Walk to the far left of the level, hacking at skeletons along the way. Step on the switch to lower the spikes and smash the globe for an item. Jump to the platform on the right and then up to the left **(P4)**. Go through the left exit and smash the lower left wall to reveal a secret room. Smash the candles and globe for items. In the previous room, hack at the floor to find another hidden area. Drop down and collect the items at the bottom. Climb back up to the top and exit through the upper left door. In the next room, smash the skeleton and globes from items. Exit top left. Watch out for the Spittle Bone spitting poison, step on the switch and jump over the box to hit the other switch. Now push the box onto the first set of spikes and hit the first switch. Jump onto the box and head up to the right-hand exit. Work your way up the room and check out the room at the top left for some handy items.



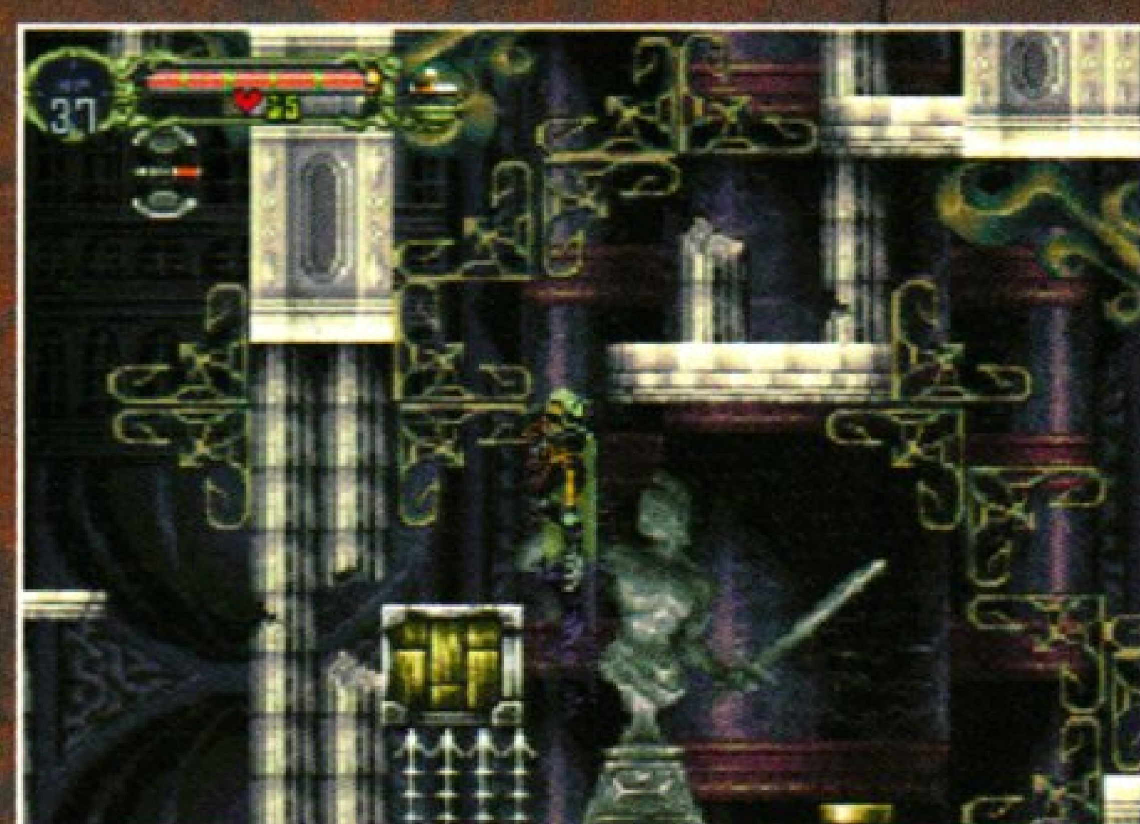


Retrace your steps to the box and spikes, and exit via the top left door. Head up the platforms and use the Save Station of the left. Continue up the room (P5) and exit top right. Here you face your first boss challenge, Gaibon and Slogra.









BOSS 1: GAIBON & SLOGRA

Make sure you have a decent weapon selected and wait for Slogra to walk toward you. Hit him and Gaibon swoops down to pick his partner up. Wait for Slogra to land again and repeat this process until he's beaten. Gaibon now attacks, using fire-balls, but is easily defeated by crouching by his feet and getting swift hits in. When he's beaten, collect the life power-up and exit.

After defeating these creatures **(P6)**, head right, along the corridor and head for the middle left exit. Save your game and go to the bottom right exit.

Step on the switch and ride the lift down to the first stop. In the room to the left are more items. If you take the left to the bottom and head left, there's a cannon that blows a hole through the wall. This takes you back to a lower part of the Alchemy Lab. Head back up the lift, past the Save Station and use the top right exit. In the next room, smash the globe for an item, dodge the Axe Knights and Spittles Bones and use the right-hand exit.

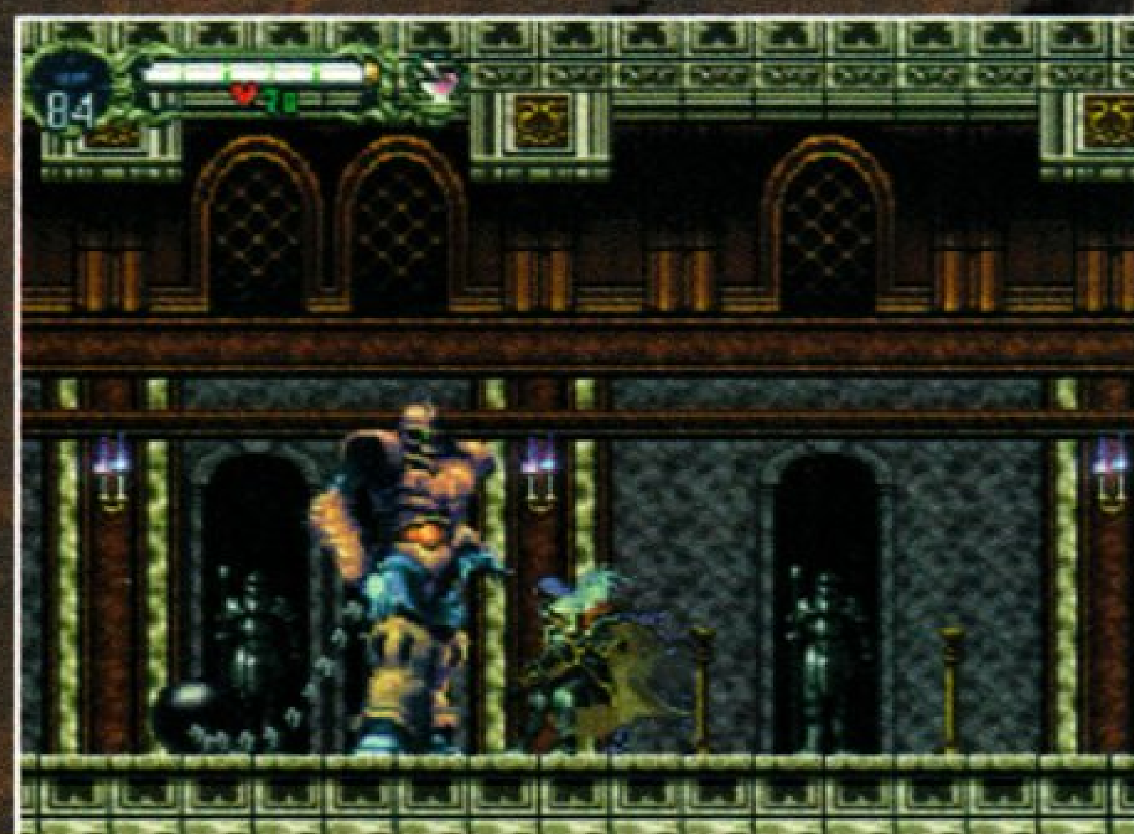




THE MARBLE GALLERY

Head right and drop down to use the Save Station. Go left and work your way down the stained glass window tower. Skelerangs and Marionettes try to hit you, so get them first. There are a couple of useful items down here, but some of them may only be reached once Alucard can fly. In the next stained glass room, drop to the bottom and go left. In the next long room, defeat the ball-and-chain swinging Plate Lord, drop down, head right and dodge the Ghosts. Drop down again and head left to face the flying Ctulhu. Continuing left brings you back to the Entry Hall level and a stone block. Step on the chain to lower it then retrace your steps to the last Save Station.

Head up and right through rooms containing grandfather clocks until you reach Maria **(P7)**. Once she's spoken to you, exit to the right. NOTE: You'll return to the clock room later. Keep going right and climb the stairs to an exit in the upper right of the room. Keep heading right and watch out for pink slab areas in the floors, as these are opened later **(P8)**. In the next room, take the lower right exit **(P9)** and proceed through the long corridor, taking care of enemies along the way. Exit to the right and enter The Outer Wall.







▲ Above-right: The clock room contains more than one exit, but these are only accessible later on.

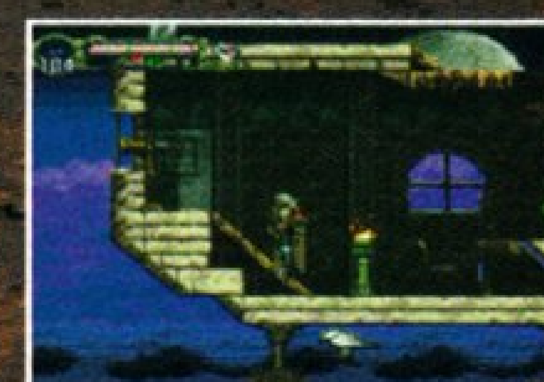




THE OUTER WALL

Head up and to the left. Keep going and save your game at the station. Retrace your steps and descend down the tower, keeping an eye out for floating Medusa Heads and tough Armour Lords. In the first left-hand passage, crouch down and smash the lower left wall for a secret item. Now drop down to the bottom of this section for a few more items then head back up to the Save Station **(P10)**. By the way, if you look through the telescope, you'll see one of three different scenes. Head up to the right and prepare to face the second boss.







BOSS 2: DOPPELGANGER 10

From a portal steps Alucard's evil twin. Try to finish this boss off quickly as prolonged fighting allows him to use more powerful abilities. Collect the item he drops, go back to save your game then exit to the right.

Under the stairs is an urn with a Max Life power-up. Above the lift is a door to the left that leads to a transporter. Hop in it and appear in a room in the Entry Hall level **(P11)**. Collect the item and step on the switch. Go through the transporter again. Carry on climbing up and hit the motor switch to activate the lift. Head to the top of the level to save your game then grab the Wolf Soul item, climb in the working left and travel down one stop. Go through the door on the left **(P12)**.





Shining Force III

Players Guide: Part two

This month we take a look at the last of the key characters in Shining Force III, and come to the conclusion that, yes, Cybel IS completely rubbish. What about the others? Let's take a look, shall we?



Questions - they always pop-up with these complicated RPG things. Here are the answers to a few of the most common problems that players encounter. If you have any more, send them in to our normal Tips Q&A section and we'll try to channel our formidable SFIII expertise in your direction.

▼ The attacks get better as you progress.



Q. Is it possible to rescue Garosh from the battle in Saraband dock? **A.** No - Garosh actually runs off and joins the party that goes through SFIII Part Two.

Q. What are the maps for? **A.** The maps correspond to certain hidden areas and tombs. Once you've found a map, that specific area may be accessed.

Q. What do the dark rings do? **A.** They curse you if you wear them, causing the odd turn to be missed and energy to be lost in battle. Instead, try using them during a fight - this will unleash any special attacks that the dark items contain.

Q. What's the Mithril for? **A.** The final village in the game contains a blacksmith. For a large fee he fashions specific weapons for your team members from the raw Mithril. Dark Matter is used to form cursed dark items.

Q. Are there any secret team members? **A.** Oh, yes! So far we've found Frank and Noon. Check next month's regular Tips section for details on how to find them... and maybe some others!







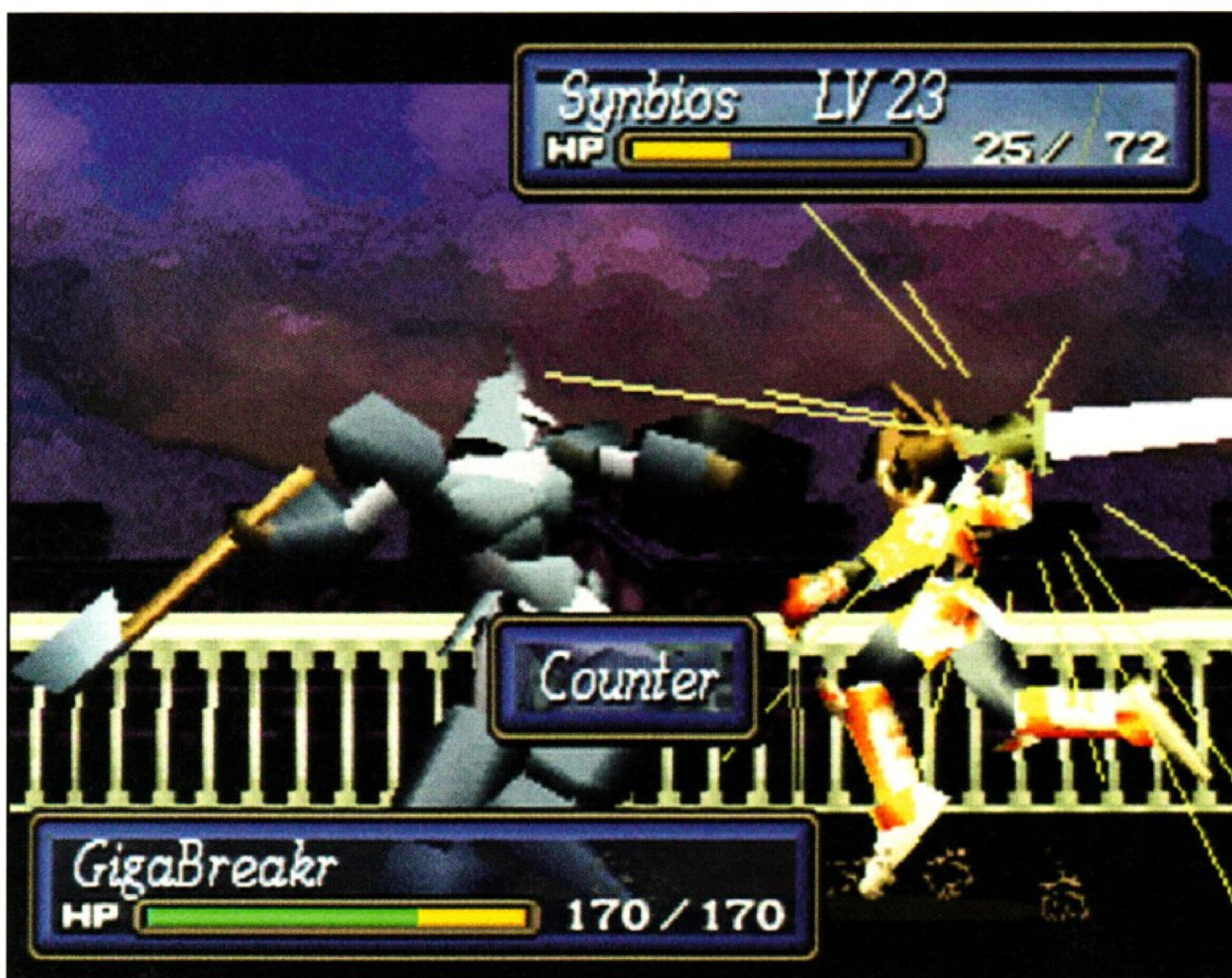


▲ It's great when the fighters are at full power.

Q. How are Parts One and Two linked? **A.** When you complete Part One it creates a special save position. When starting Part Two (sadly only available on import), the game gives you the choice of loading this position and continuing with the changes made as you travelled through Part One. Part Two is playable without Part One, but many of the characters and events are different if you don't have a Part One save position.

Q. How often are characters promoted? **A.** Only once, but they continue gaining power levels and learning new skills right through to the end of the game.













DANTARES



Having four legs surely makes buying trousers a complete nightmare for Centaur Knight Dantares, but what he loses in the pant department is more than made up for by his considerable strength. He also has a great movement range, so be careful not to leave him isolated at the front as he rushes off into battle. One of the game's better characters.

MAGIC RATING: DEBBIE MCGEE
HARDNESS RATING: OLD LEATHER
EARS: SATISFYINGLY LARGE
OVERALL: 8/10

STANDARD ATTACKS

Dantares starts the game as easily the toughest character, but by the end he's overtaken by a few of the other hard-hitters like Synbios and Obright who have a greater maximum level. His Mega Charge is an excellent three-hitter that finishes off most enemies, while variations like the Super Charge are also pretty good point-takers.

MAGIC ATTACKS

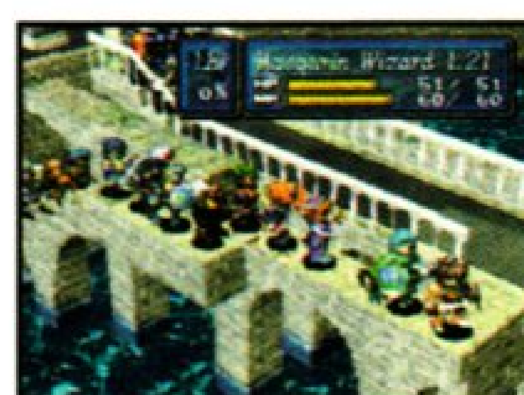
Dantares doesn't perform any magic in the game. However, we hear that in his spare time he enjoys performing at children's parties, where his rabbit-out-of-a-hat routine is a huge hit with the kids. Sadly, it's rather ineffective in the combat arena, as hardened Imperial troops do not think bunny rabbits are "cute" or "nice and fluffy," which leads to potential embarrassment when it comes down to it, as waving a silk hanky to an angry Griffon doesn't help.

COMBAT TIPS

His short-range lance attacks and lack of magic skills mean he's only useful as a front-line attacker, but he is one of the toughest characters you command, especially when he decides to perform his fantastically damaging Mega Charge. His long movement range often makes him useful for tracking down lone baddies and running off to hunt for hidden items around the edges of battlefields, but only at the expense of depriving the main group of one of the star players. He's really good, so keep him alive. He has a pretty second set of armour too (as do all of the characters when they get promoted), so bear that in mind before giving up on the weaker team members.



▲ An axe in the head - not a very friendly thing to do.





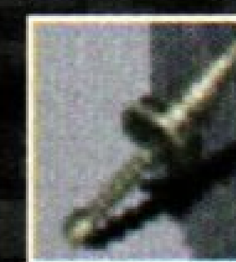
WEAPONS

He's a strong chap, so he gets the best use out of the heavy lances and the bigger, more damaging weapons. He can also be equipped with a spear for a longer range attack, but this is in exchange for a huge loss in attack points and special moves. So far we've only found three of his specials - Lance Charge, Super Charge and Mega Charge. Is there a weapon specific one?


NELSON LANCE


BATTLE SPEAR


STEEL LANCE


HEAVY LANCE



▲ The second part of the three-hit Mega Charge.



▲ Dantares starts as the strongest fighter by far.



▲ He has a long range and some devastating attacks too.





JUSTIN



A centaur who is one of the last recruits to the team, Justin has more in common with bow-using Hayward than fellow centaur Dantares. He's a pretty tough character though, but it's his long-range attacks that are the star here, with this handy bowman quickly becoming a key team member. Exploit his powers to the max.

MAGIC RATING: DEBBIE MCGEE
HARDNESS RATING: SOLID
EARS: MODERATE
OVERALL: 7/10

STANDARD ATTACKS

He's dead handy with a bow, having some great specials like the Dazzle Shot and the great-looking Armour Shot. He also has a huge attacking range which comes in handy for taking out distant and obscured enemies. His defence isn't the highest, so look after him and keep him away from the front line.

COMBAT TIPS

Now call me old fashioned, but have you ever met anyone called Justin who's been any good at fighting? No, didn't think so. Strangely enough though, SFIII's Justin happens to be pretty damn hard - maybe the word 'Justin' translates to something like 'Zorlon the Mighty' in Japanese? Anyway, he's rather tough after a few levels of power-ups, and may be used in a very similar way to fellow archer Hayward - a second-line long-range attacker.







▲ (Above) More excellent SFIII special effects in action.

WEAPONS

He may only be equipped with bows, so it's a good job he's great at using them and has a terrific range of attack. The bows are quite dull as they don't contain any specific specials, just different ranges and attack points. However, these long-range bow attacks are still an important tactic to use, often getting key hits on distant and obscured enemies.



▲ His defence is pretty good, but not legendary.

MURASAME



Wow, just what every good game should have... a Ninja! Murasame joins the Shining Force III gang just before the massive battle with the Golem about half way through the game. Although weak at first, Murasame becomes extremely useful later on, with his good balance of standard attacks and magic spells making him a quality all-rounder. And let's face it, it's always handy to have a Ninja about the place, right?

MAGIC RATING: PENN AND TELLER
HARDNESS RATING: SHAOLIN
EARS: DISAPOINTINGLY SMALL
OVERALL: 7/10

STANDARD ATTACKS

Make sure you visit a weapon shop as soon as possible - there's a special weapon on sale there just for Ninjas to use. What a coincidence. Although the sword he starts off with is pretty good too, with a nice range of attacks and specials. These super attacks, like the Cocoon, are a bit strange to look at, but get the job done nonetheless. His regular hits also cause a fair amount of damage, and when combined with the decent selection of magic attacks he has at his disposal, Murasame is a great player.

COMBAT TIPS

He's a pretty straightforward kind of guy really, with a great mixture of power and magic making him one of the most balanced characters in the game. His late joining means he never gains huge levels of strength like Synbios or Dantares, so don't throw him in with the first wave of attackers - keep him nearby to heal, launch the odd attack and throw in the occasional magic spell. He jumps and somersaults when attacking too, which makes him one of the best characters to watch in action as well.



WEAPONS

He can't be equipped with any of the other fighters' weapons, instead relying on the standard sword he came with and the Nunchukas which are for sale in the village shops. His weapons don't have the biggest range of specials either, but his standard attacks are probably better than average. And the Nunchukas aren't really that good, to be honest.



▲ His standard sword attacks are rather good...



▲ And his magic attacks make him a well-rounded chap.





▲ Judging by the size of his ears, Murasame's a human.





▲ (Left) Bravery in the course of duty. You go girl!

RATCHET



Ratchet is actually a semi-secret character. To recruit him to your team you need to thoroughly explore the haunted mansion in Quonos village, just after winning the tough battle with the Inferior Vandal. Go into one of the rooms on the ground floor to see Ratchet in his laboratory tinkering with his equipment. At first, Ratchet will run off, but he appears again later and joins the team.

Magic Rating: Debbie McGee
Hardness Rating: Cheese
Ears: Poor
Overall: 6/10

STANDARD ATTACKS

He's rather puny when he first joins, but he's also a quick-learner with great moves like the Rocket Punch and the great-looking golden Nova Shot. He doesn't learn any magic attacks during the game, so he remains a pretty-useful-but-not-quite-essential member of the team. His specials are pretty damaging, so it's always worth throwing him into battle to do some damage, even if he gets wiped out in the process.

COMBAT TIPS

Robotically enhanced Ratchet is another long-range hitter, so he makes a great second-line attacker when he's positioned behind a tough battle-axe like Obright or Dantares. He gains power very quickly, so make sure to keep him engaged in point-earning action all the way through the game. His defensive skills grow quickly too, so keep using him to make Ratchet an even better member of the team.

WEAPONS

He's another one of these magic glove specialists, with new gloves helping to further boost his range of specials and normal attacks. He's not that good with some gloves though, missing out on some of the more impressive moves, but his unique throwing style is enhanced by some of the more solid and powerful upgrades. It's a shame he hasn't managed to build himself any steam-powered special weapons.







▲ Even Ratchet is essential in the final massive battle.



▲ Ratchet bravely tackles the Holy Warrior – the plucky little chap obviously doesn't know that he cannot be destroyed!

IRENE



It's quite possible to steam through the entire game without saving Irene from the bandits at Railhead station, but get to her first and you'll have a first class magician on the team. She's actually pretty similar to Kahn in terms of overall power, but has a better range of magic attacks and is also a fair bit better at standard combat too. She's also a human, so make sure she does us proud!

Magic: Great Soprendo
Hardness Rating: Not Bad For A Girl
Ears: Disappointing
Overall: 7/10

STANDARD ATTACKS

She's a very well-balanced fighter, although some of her normal hand-to-hand attacks are pretty weak at first. But look after her, as later on in the game she becomes a very important member, especially when she's been promoted to a second level character.



▲ She punches enemies like a beat 'em up character.

COMBAT TIPS

She's another fairly weak character, but the fact that she joins so early gives you plenty of time to get her powered-up to a decent level. But it's her magic spells which make her such a cool character, with a good range of healing and attacking spells at her disposal. She's not exactly the toughest there is, but anyone with the Heal spell should always be looked after.

WEAPONS

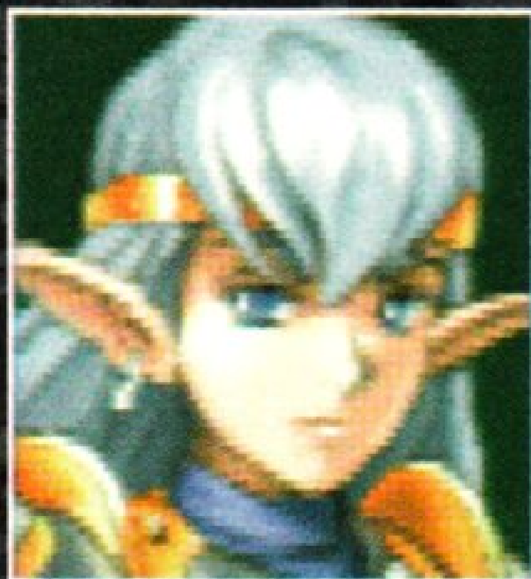
Another glove user, with heavier and less magical gloves improving her attack rating, while special gloves found along the way contain some great specials that she makes use of really well.





▲ A good combination of magic and strength = nice.

CYBEL



For the purposes of this guide, I'm currently playing Shining Force III through for the third time, and STILL can't manage to get Cybel powered-up to a decent level. Which leads me to form the sad conclusion that she's rubbish, despite her lovely blue colour and nice big ears. Her lowly defence rating and even lower attack level stop her from doing, well, anything really.

MAGIC RATING: DEBBIE MCGEE
HARDNESS RATING: WARM MARGARINE
EARS: MASSIVE
OVERALL: 2/10

STANDARD ATTACKS

The only possible way of powering-up Cybel is to make sure she gets lots of kills early on in the game, but even the weak enemies at the start are too much for her to handle. She does learn a nice Tornado special attack, but the useless one hit moves she usually launches won't do us any good at all. The problem is that she has way too low a defence rating, meaning that one tap from a baddie is usually enough to finish her off. Shame.

COMBAT TIPS

Just managing to keep her alive through one battle is a mammoth achievement. The enemies seem to know that this equestrian liability is the puniest member of the team, which is why they always try to attack her first - making it even tougher to build-up her puny skills. The best tip for using Cybel? Don't bother reviving her at the next village when she gets killed. I feel mean saying that, but it's true. May the centaur God take pity on her puny soul. And hopefully re-incarnate her in a slightly tougher body next time.

WEAPONS

She uses lances and spears like Dantares, but she's equally poor with all of them, lacking the power to drive home those crucial hits. Leave her back at one of the villages to make the tea while the real warriors handle the fighting.



▲ Yep, that's Cybel dying in the heat of battle again.





▲ (Left) Another rare picture of Cybel actually alive.





▲ (Right) Cybel in half-decent attack shock!



▲ Once again, Cybel dies. Ooh, I'm just *so* sad!



▲ She's alive! And actually doing some damage too.

ELDER



Elder would seem to have potential, what with his excellent range and obvious flying advantages, but he's beaten only by Cybel in the annual Most Rubbish Game Character Awards. Once again it's a nightmare to raise his power levels, with one hit from a decent enemy usually being enough to dispose of this feathered interloper.

MAGIC RATING: DEBBIE MCGEE
HARDNESS RATING: RIPE TOMATO
EARS: DISAPOINTINGLY SMALL
OVERALL: 3/10

STANDARD ATTACKS

He's able to wield a sword, and may even use stronger versions after he's been promoted, but keeping this puny bird alive long enough to become useful is difficult. As with all the characters he gets more powerful as the game progresses, it's just that the enemies and his team mates progress quicker. He doesn't even know any magic... d'oh!

COMBAT TIPS

He does have a long-range, and may obviously hover over inaccessible areas - try stocking him up with healing potions then flying him out of danger, creating a half-decent mobile animal hospital that even Rolf Harris would be proud of. Or failing that, just don't bother - he's rubbish. I'd give him about 30% if I was reviewing him.

WEAPONS

He starts off carrying a Short Sword, but funnily enough, he actually does more damage when using only his bare claws. If you manage to keep him alive long enough to be promoted he can use some of Synbios' magical swords, but not to any useful effect.





▲ Maybe if you *really* persevere he might become useful.





▲ (Right) Masquirin tries to raise Elder's defence.



▲ The biggest mismatch in the entire game.



▲ Elder - probably about to die very shortly. As usual.






▲ Move the fighters to the castle side of the bridge.




▲ This final battle will take well over an hour to win.



▲ Even Kahn's Elbesem magic has no effect here.





THE FINAL BATTLE

Seriously, this last mega-scrap will take well over an hour to complete, and there's no way you can win! The Holy Warrior may be weakened slightly by your attacks, but this section is all about survival. The second unit goes to the dam upstream, where they have to fight a simultaneous battle to open the flood-gates and destroy the massive enemy. Meanwhile, the main team has to concentrate on staying alive on the bridge long enough to see the results...

SURVIVAL

First of all, you need to prepare well for this final section - once the Holy Warrior has been defeated there's another battle to go into straight after, so load your team members with as many healing potions as possible - they WILL need them. Also, don't forget to visit the bar in the previous village and recruit those freelance fighters, as without them it will not be possible to win the battle at the dam with just the one warrior. You have been warned!

TWIGGY, DONGO, ELRICK AND PIPER

Before exiting the catacombs and entering the final battle, it's essential to go back to the village and recruit those layabout ruffians to the cause. These weekend warriors spend most of their time in the village pub, but throw a few gold coins in their direction and drag them out, as they form the important second unit that tackles the simultaneous battle for control of the dam - this secondary battle CANNOT be won without these helpers. As it happens they're rather tasty - good job too.

RETREAT!

While the dam battle is happening, concentrate on keeping everyone at the bridge alive. Then, just before the second unit defeats the Gigabreaker at the dam, start to move the bridge-based characters as close to the castle side of the bridge as possible - this will stop them being washed away with the Holy Warrior when the bridge is flooded. From here, it's right into the final battle with...

PRINCE ARRAWNT

This is something of an 'all hands to the pump' situation, with only one tactic required - survive any way you can! This is where the bridge section becomes even more important, as completing that battle with a full complement of fighters makes taking Arrawnt a little easier. Don't worry about your characters' magic levels as they all get boosted to their maximums when you arrive here. But items cannot be replenished beforehand, so it's vital to keep some healing potions in reserve. Take out those two magicians behind Arrawnt first, then move a strong character into the gap in front of him, following this up with some long-range magic and bow attacks. And don't forget to save the game regularly, or it'll be back to the start of the bridge battle again!

BYE BYE!

If you've bought yourself a copy of Shining Force III, you've no doubt already discovered a few moves and items that we've not covered (along with the rumoured FOUR secret characters!), which is one of the coolest things about the game - there's just so much great stuff to find that it's essential to play it through a second time to save all of the characters, discover the new secret team members, find new items and perfect that team-leading touch. A classic game. Will we see Shining Force IV on the Dreamcast? Oh, wow... hope so!



▲ He's on 285 points at the moment, but the super-tough end boss starts on 600!

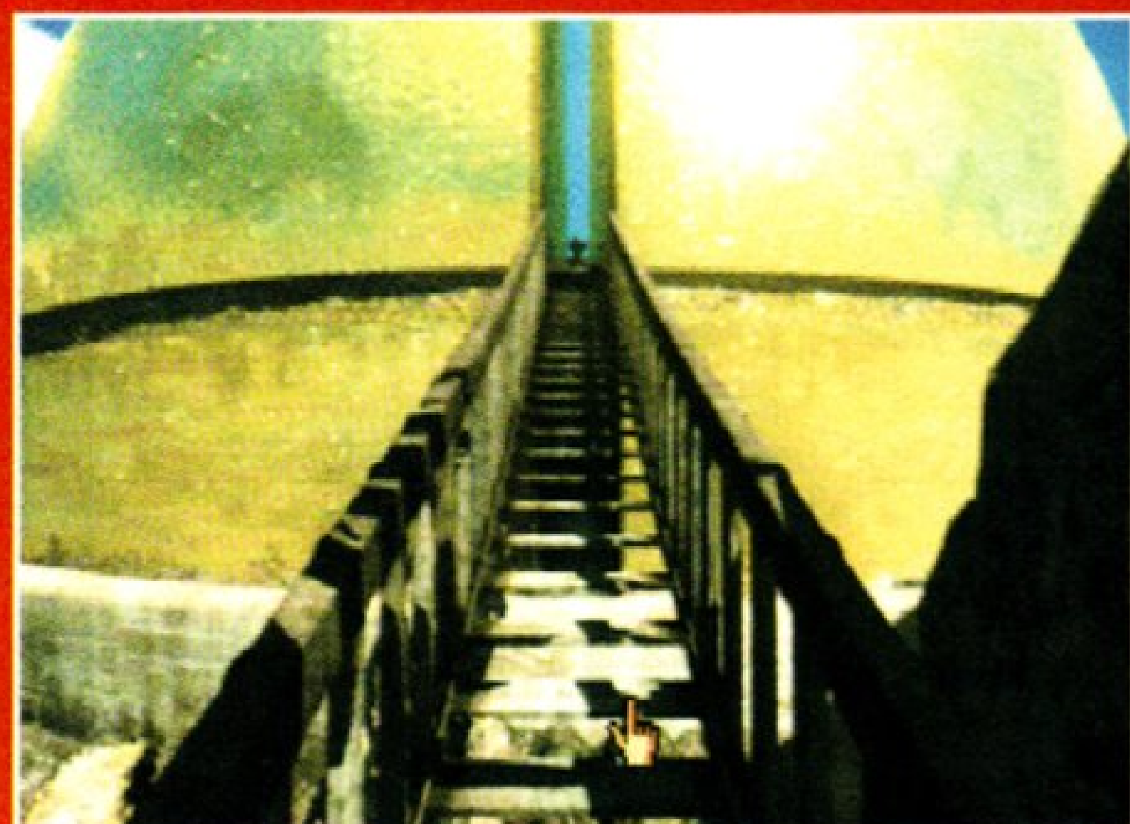


▲ Synbios' awesome level four Spark attack sometimes does over 100 points of damage!

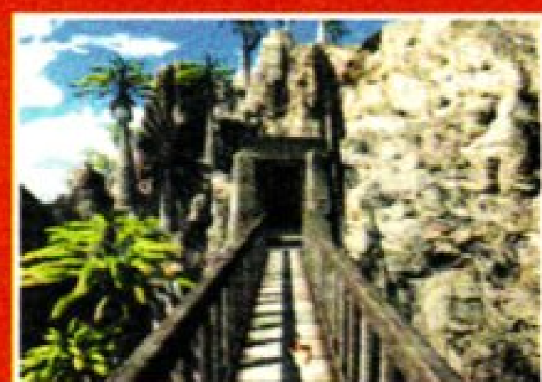
Riven The Guide: Part 2

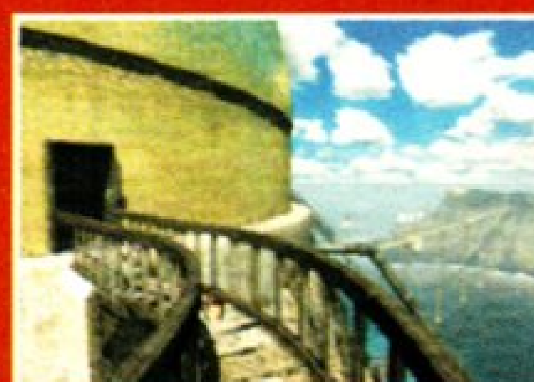
Riven is difficult. Riven is very difficult. Riven is, like, one of the most difficult games there has ever been... and we're lumbered with completing this epic so that YOU have an easy time cruising through it. Nice of us, eh?

Last month we explored the islands, learned how to count in D'ni numbers, activated the main power supply and started to use the linking books which allow easy travel between the five Riven islands. This month we'll actually get to meet the mysterious figure known as Gehn, and hopefully, solve the rest of the puzzles and finally get out of this damn world.



I've really been looking forward to doing this guide.

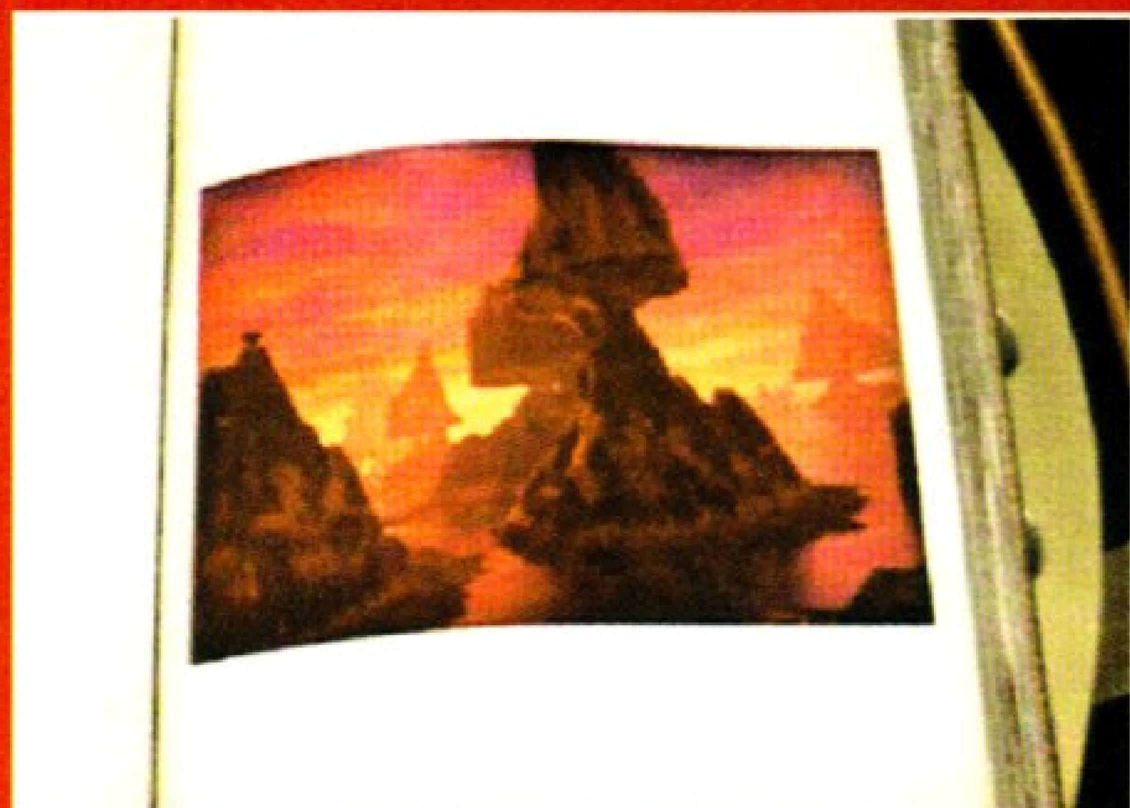




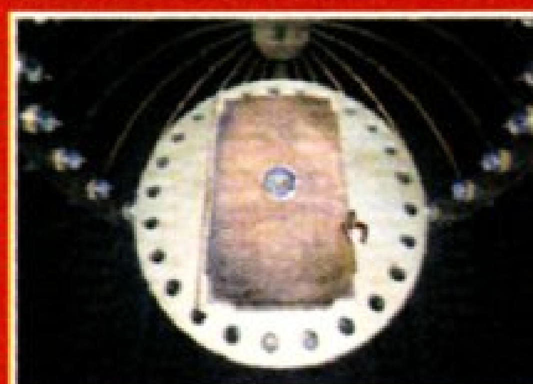
Thankfully, we covered most of the really tough puzzles last month – we're on the homeward stretch now. Thank God.

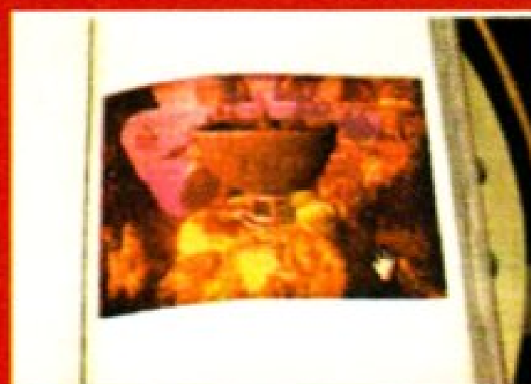
GEHN'S 233rd AGE

After activating the power and using your first link book, the next section starts with you trapped rather awkwardly in a cage, which limits your movements for a while. Turn to the left twice to see Gehn's own personal crest - five pen nibs, the D'ni number five and symbols representing the five open books. Push the button in the middle of this device to actually receive a visitation from Gehn himself!



The linking books are now fully-active and ready to use.





Explore the islands easily now the books are working.

MEETING GEHN

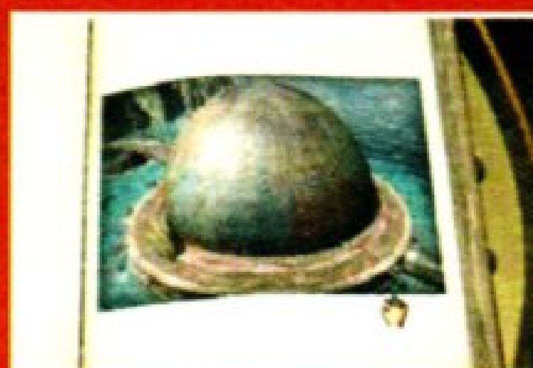
This is a strange meeting. Gehn has you trapped and wants to convince you that he's a nice guy. Taking the prison book from you to check out your honesty he then gives a long speech about how he has changed and become a much kinder bloke. Now he asks you to link to D'ni first, presumably to make sure you're not trying to send him off into a trap.

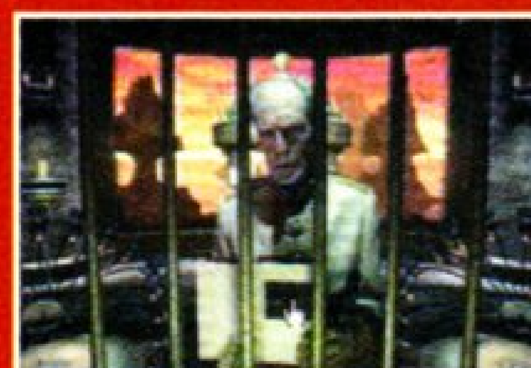


You're in a cage, but are still able to reach the link books.

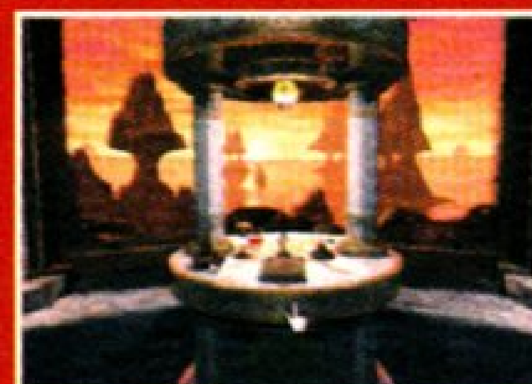
CHOICE ONE: WAIT

If you wait for a while before accepting his offer, Gehn will close the linking book, activate the furnace and ask you to reconsider while he disappears off to continue with his gardening. Now that the furnace is working, the five linking books are now ready to be used, allowing you to visit any of them as you choose. The shape of each island is shown on the cover of each book - and if you've been paying attention, you'll know that there's one island left that you haven't visited. Open the fifth book (the one with a lone square on the cover) and link off to explore the new island. But it would be better to wait, as there's a code you need to find in Gehn's house first.





Link to Gehn's house for the first face-to-face Riven meeting.





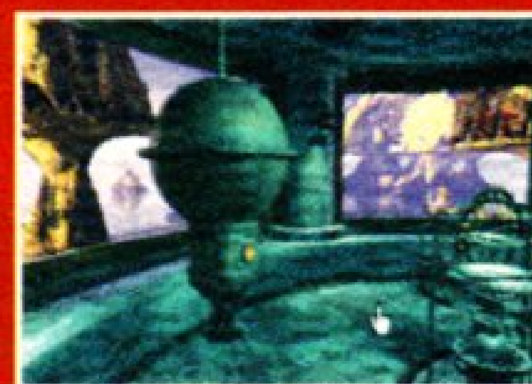
Trap Gehn in the Prison book and you're free to explore.



That's Gehn's special ink he writes the books with.

CHOICE TWO: LINK

If you immediately accept Gehn's offer to link, he will now be trapped and you are free to explore the rest of the area outside of the cage. If you remember reading Atrus' journal, he wrote that the Prison book is only able to hold one man - if a second person uses the book, the first is released. So go ahead and access the prison book. Gehn will follow, releasing you from the prison and trapping himself. You are now free to explore the room, but this time the furnace needs to be activated by yourself. Once it's powered-up you're free to go wherever you like in the world of Riven, thanks to the traveller-friendly linking books.

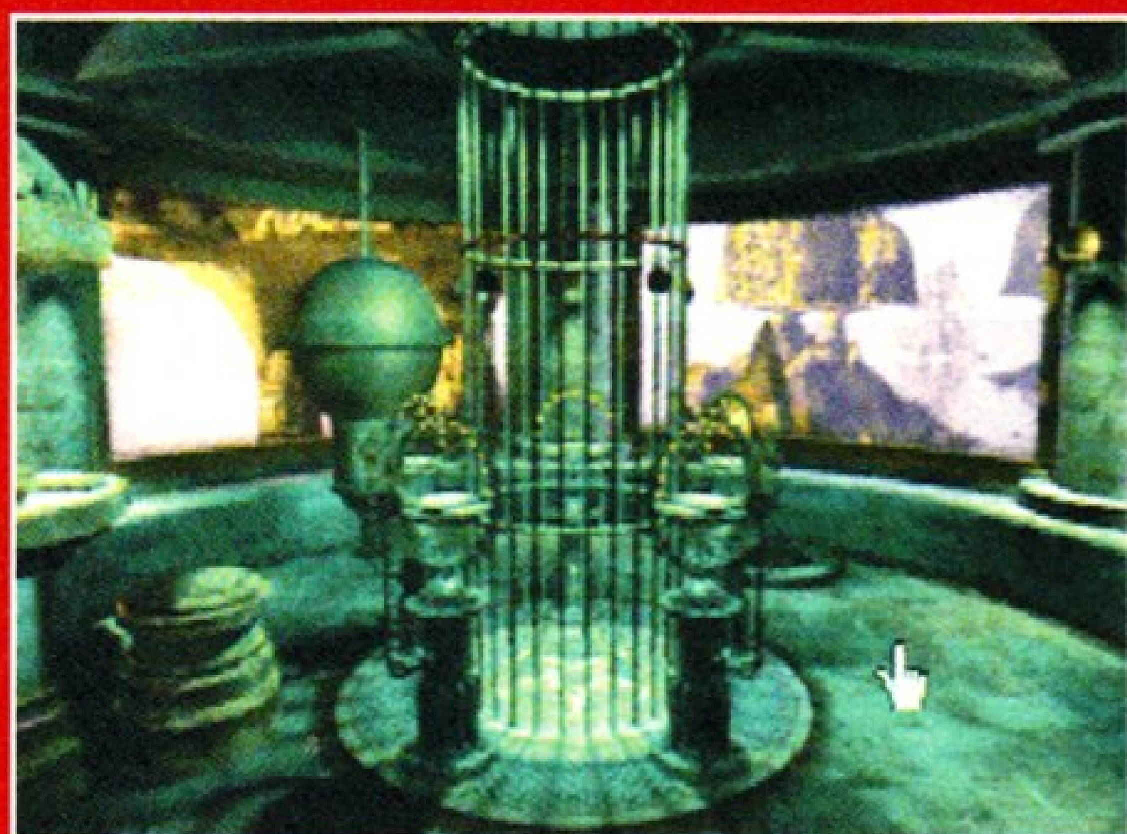




That's his own furnace used to power his personal books.

GEHN'S PLACE

Over on the writing table is a copy of the latest book Gehn is working on, along with his pens and special inks. There is also a door leading to the outside world, but it can't be opened just yet. Take the ladder that leads down to the lower floor - this is Gehn's bedroom. His personal journal is in here, along with an important sphere that plays five different tones each time



Gehn has a mini torture chamber and prison in his flat!

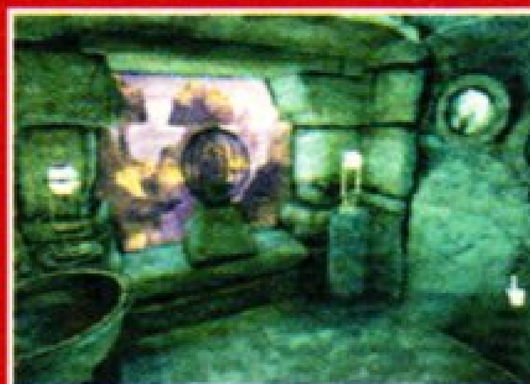
it's activated. Concentrate on memorising the order of the tones you hear (this sequence is different each time you play the game). Now you have the information, head back upstairs and access the book with the small square on the cover.

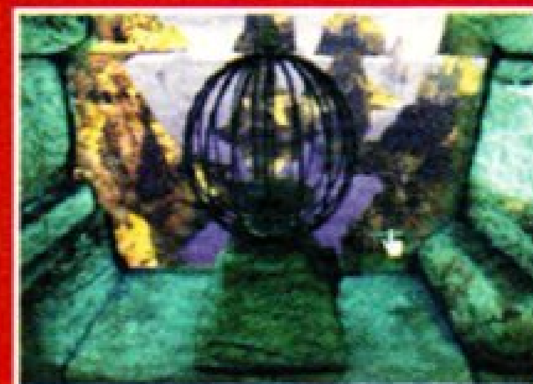
FINDING CATHERINE

As you turn around outside the fifth dome, you see the remains of a massive tree. If you've already read Gehn's personal diary you should know that this is the Prison island - an area which was once part of the rest of Riven. The tree stump has a kind of rusty dome built into it. Head forward up to the stump and look around for the lift at its core. Pull the triangle on the right to move up to the cage on the next floor. Ignore the switches - we'll come back to those in a moment. Now you should finally get to meet Catherine. Remember one of the unexplained views from back in the Throne Room on Survey island? That was actually showing Catherine's room here - pervy Gehn has been keeping a close watch on her...

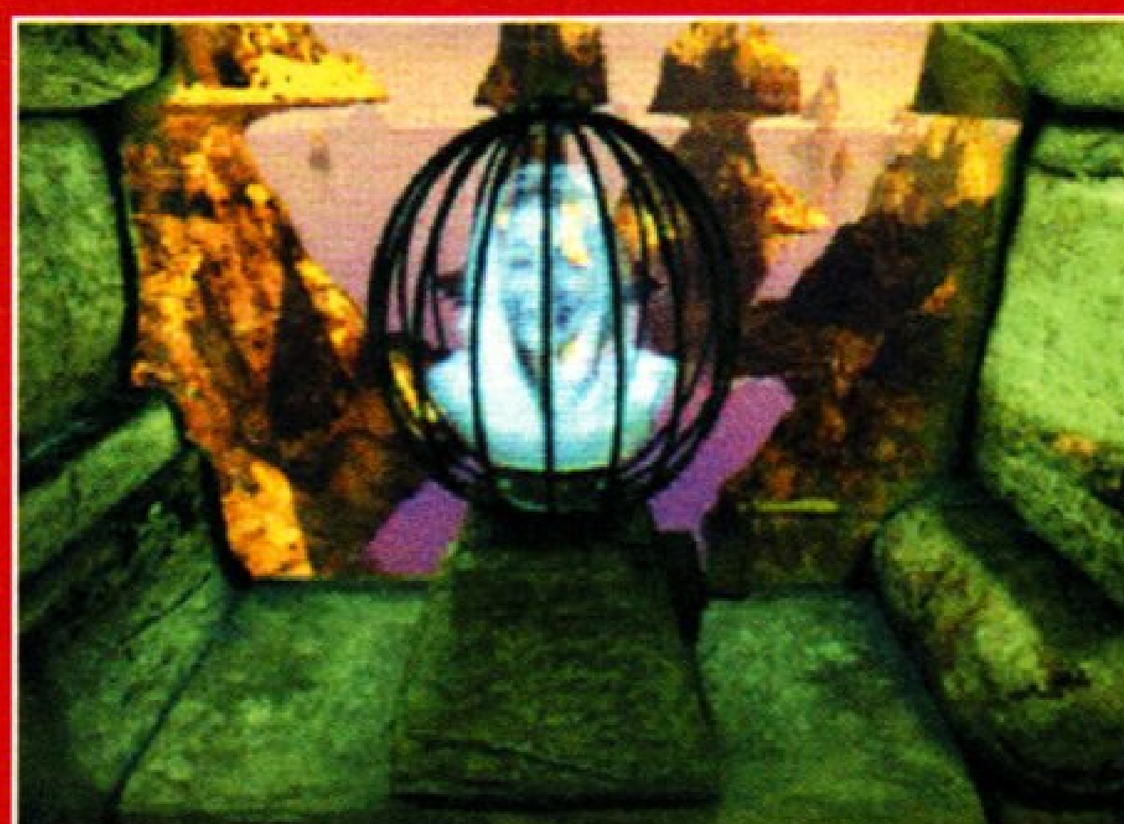
FREEDOM

Now Catherine should give you some important information here - the way to release her from the prison she's currently locked in. The device against the back wall of the lift is the lock for the cage, so here you need to use the little pedals to duplicate the five tones





His bedroom is suspiciously tidy. Note lack of stained clothes.



Gehn has some kind of viewer in his room. Who is she?



Free Catherine and she's grateful. But not *that* grateful...

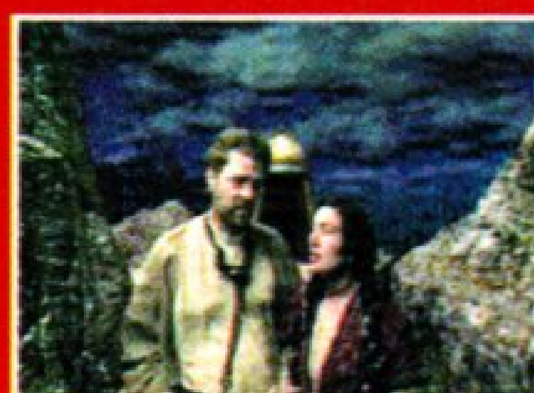
that the device back in Gehn's room made. Do this correctly and flip the lever to free Catherine! You now rise up to meet her, where she tells you to return to the telescope (way back at the start of the game), to free her chum Atrus.

BACK TO GENERATOR ISLAND

So now you're familiar with using Gehn's ace linking books, use the book with five squares on the front to zip back to Generator island. Now head right back through the big dome, all the way back to the telescope you saw when you emerged from prison at the beginning of the whole shebang. Examine the left leg of the telescope, providing you haven't fiddled with it before, there should be a support that prevents the device from dropping below a certain level. Remove this support, then click on the cover on the ground in the centre of the telescope.

ACTIVATE

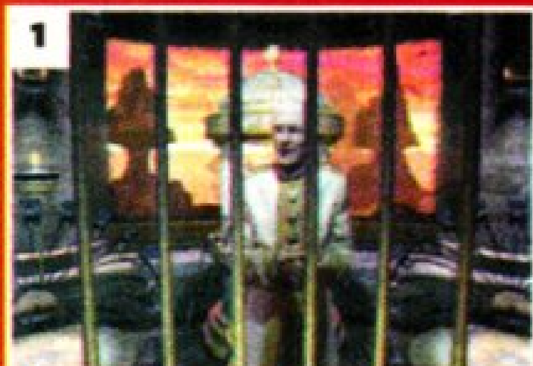
Now key in the combination that was written by Catherine in her journal. Each number signifies the location of a button from left to right, and when you've pressed the buttons in the right sequence, click on the handle to open the small, round cover that seals the fissure. Now take a look at the button on the right side of the telescope railing. Move the handle around the outside until it points downwards, then press the button in the middle - the telescope will now break through the glass covering the fissure, which leads to...

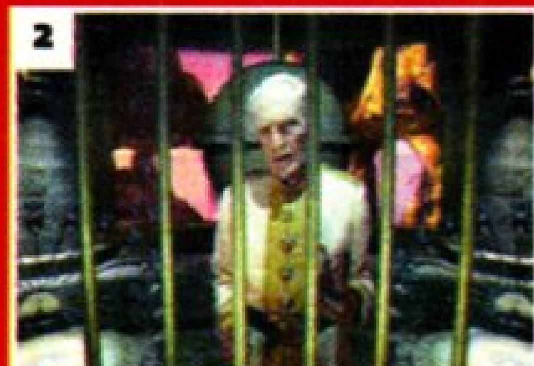



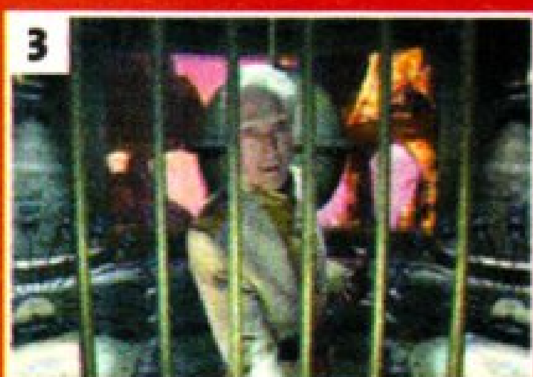
The fissure sucks the telescope down in to the void below.

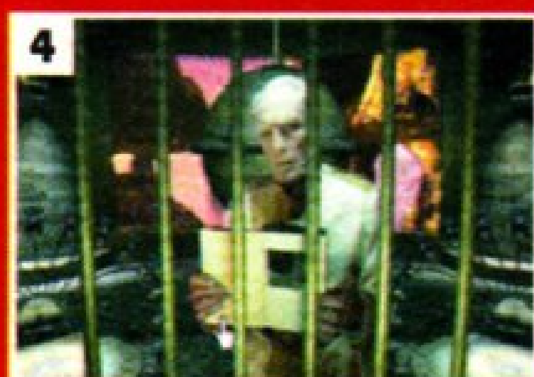
THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE I'D LIKE TO THANK...

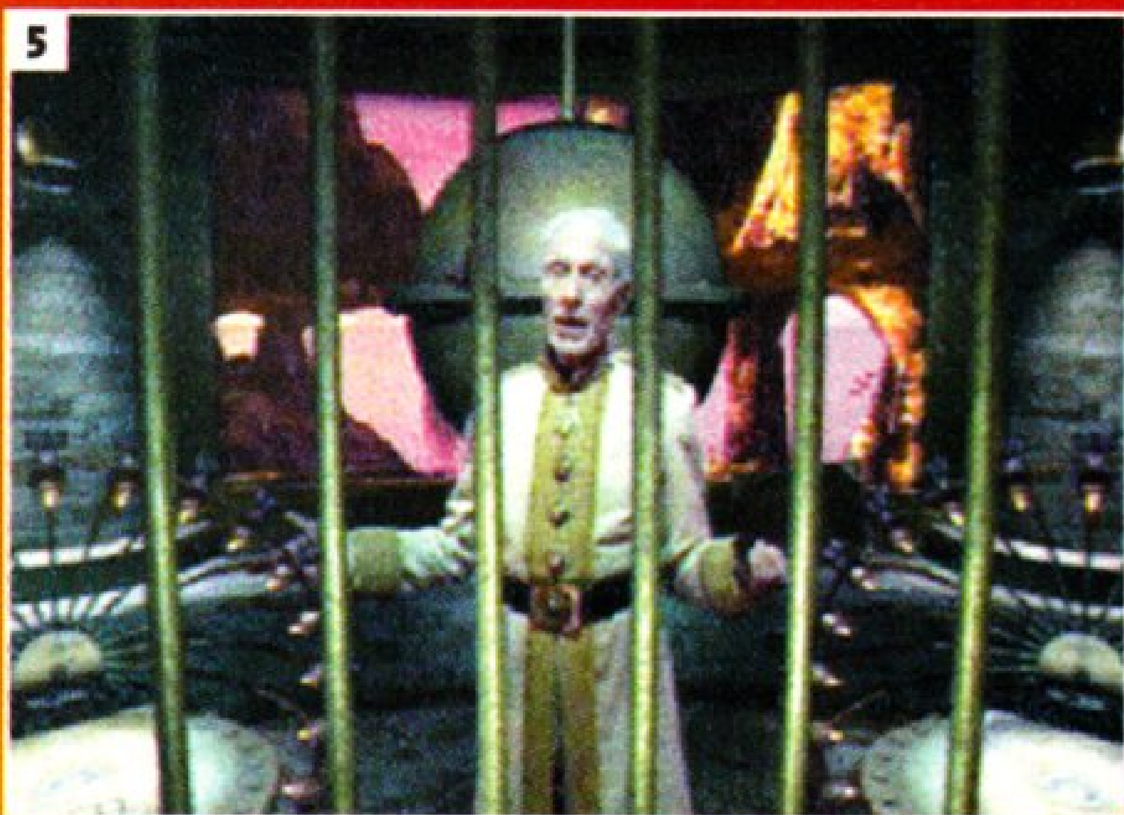
One you've linked to Gehn's home, he launches in to an epic ten-minute speech about what a nice guy he's become, really pushing the ham-factor to the limit. (1) A funny thing happened to me on the way to the studio. (2) And then she said "No, I've never come this way before." (3) Does it feel nice when I do that? (4) This book is 2,000 years overdue. (5) Thank you, thank you very much. Oh, no stop,, you're too kind.







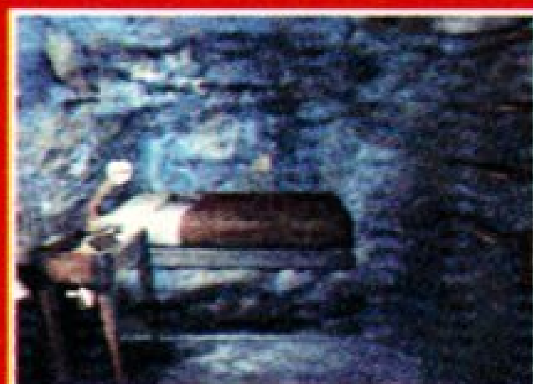




Just what IS he reaching for in picture number three?

GAME OVER

Party on, dude! The fissure breaks, meaning that Catherine and Atrus are finally reunited to do whatever is is that young couples do. But instead of giving you huge lumps of cash as a sign of their gratitude, they throw you into the fissure! Don't worry, it'll make sense when you see how the ending turns out...




Mmm... bed. I want to go to sleep. Riven does that to me now.

ALTERNATE ENDINGS

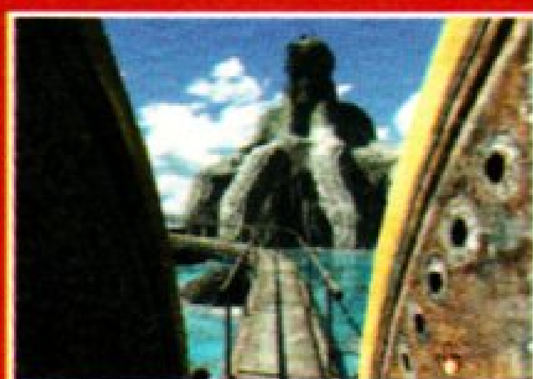
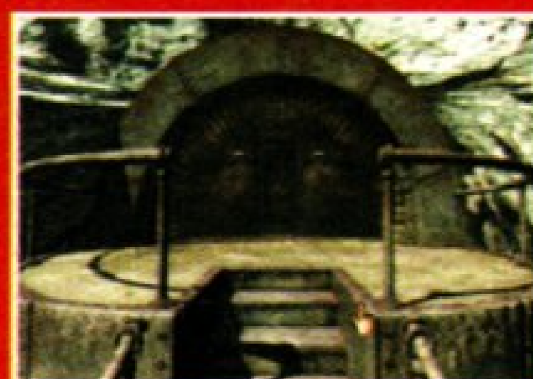
So, you've completed one of the toughest games available - what's next? Why not try playing through it again to see some of the alternate endings that are available! If you haven't already gone mad playing Riven, now is the time to start...



Remember the order of the tones this device generates.

TRAPPED BY GEHN

Once you've reached the point in the game where you've gone through the trap book, Gehn will follow you and become trapped himself. But you still have the linking book in your possession, so if you place your hand on the image again, you swap places with Gehn who now realises that the book is a prison. He thanks you for your noble sacrifice that will go down in history as enabling him to "purify millions", then he closes the book on you forever, leaving you stuck for eternity in the trap.

The prison is on top of that gigantic old tree stump.

TRAPPED BY GEHN AGAIN

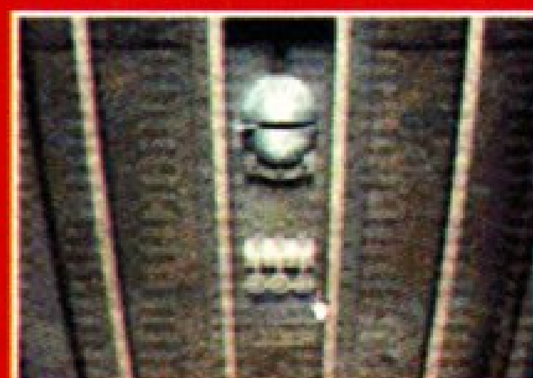
If you switch places with Gehn anywhere on Riven before you reach the right part of the game (by touching the prison book prematurely), the game always reverts back to the lab. But if you swap places with Gehn while in the Rebel Age, he seems pleased that he finally gets the chance to meet with the Rebels "face to face". Then he goes on about your noble sacrifice, place in history and lots of other historical psycho-babble like he usually churns out when you see him. Fun, but ultimately useless.



Are we there yet? Catherine appears right at the end of Riven.

TRAPPED BY THE LINKING BOOK: VERSION ONE

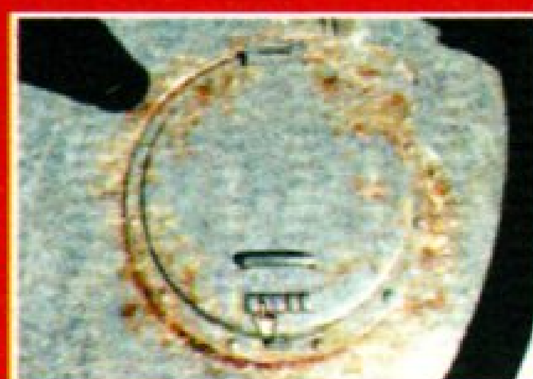
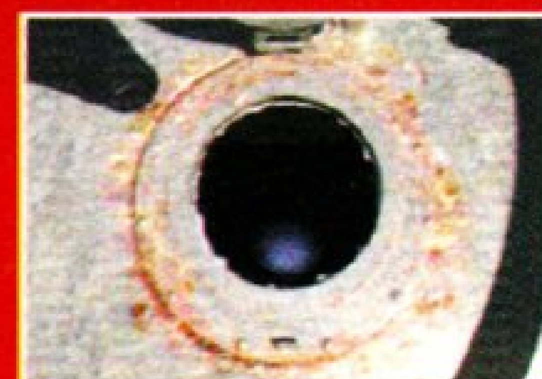
Once you're given the linking book back in the Rebel Age, you can try to go through yourself right away. If you do, you end up trapped there. The game ends as two of the rebels peer at the prison book (which is apparently is starting to crackle as they burn it), wondering how you could've been so stupid as to trap yourself in your own prison. Well?




The device on the left recreates the tone-code Gehn uses.

TRAPPED BY THE LINKING BOOK: VERSION TWO

If you manage to leave the Rebel Age without trapping yourself in the linking book, Gehn gets hold of it. The next thing you see is Gehn's servant being used as a guinea pig to take your place in the prison, then you find yourself trapped in the cage back in Gehn's workshop. He shoots you and then expresses amazement at your stupidity (once again!) as you slowly die from the wound.

Key in the code from Catherine's journal to open the cover.

TRAPPED BY THE LINKING BOOK: PART THREE

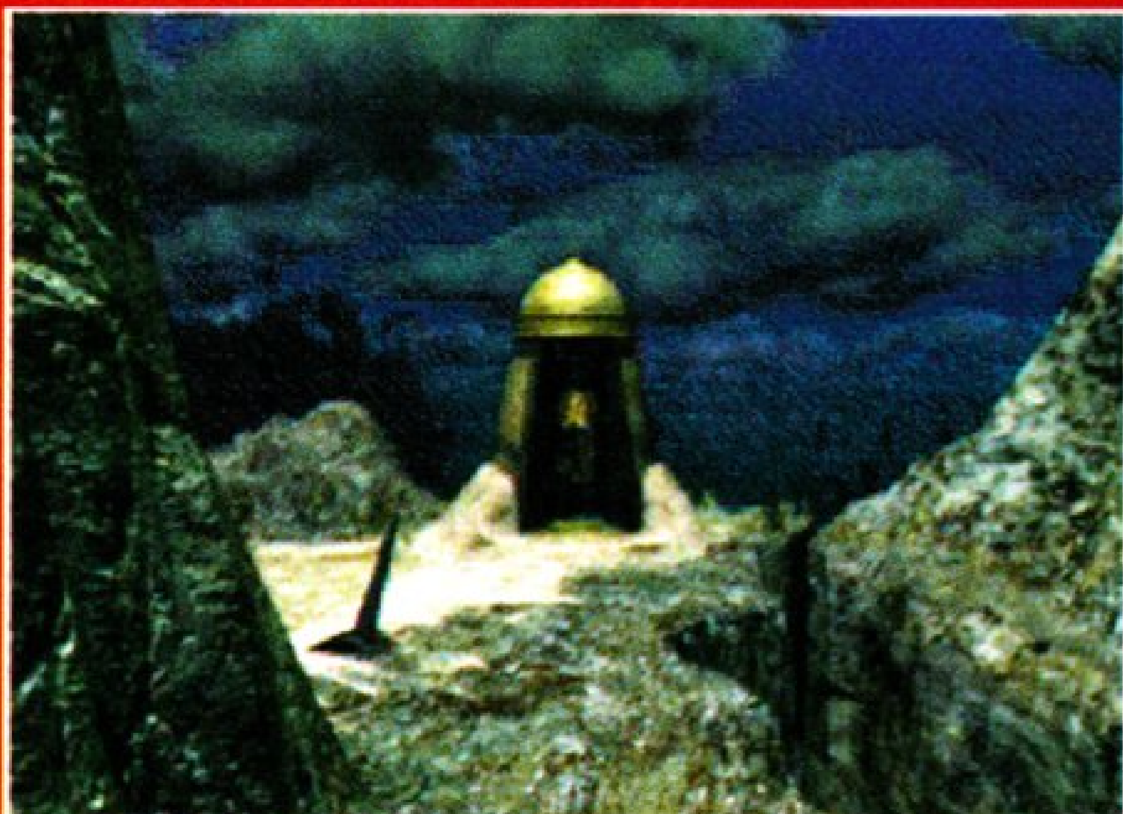
If you've been to see Gehn before getting the linking book back from the rebels, he will ask you to go and collect the book. When you return, he then asks you to go through. Alternatively, if you see him with the linking book, he'll give you the long speech and then ask you to go through. If you see Gehn before the rebels and then trap yourself in the linking book somewhere in Riven before returning to give Gehn the book, you




One of the cool hi-res scenes from earlier in the game. The latter parts mostly take place in darker, moodier indoor areas.



Wanton destruction of such a beautiful world? Sadly essential.


The game ends right back where it started. Nice touch.

get a slightly modified version of the previous trapped ending. In this one, Gehn still shoots you, but the speech is slightly different, reflecting the fact that he already asked you to bring him the book, but that "circumstances have changed". Probably due, once again, to your stupidity!

SIGNALLING ATRUS TOO EARLY: PART ONE

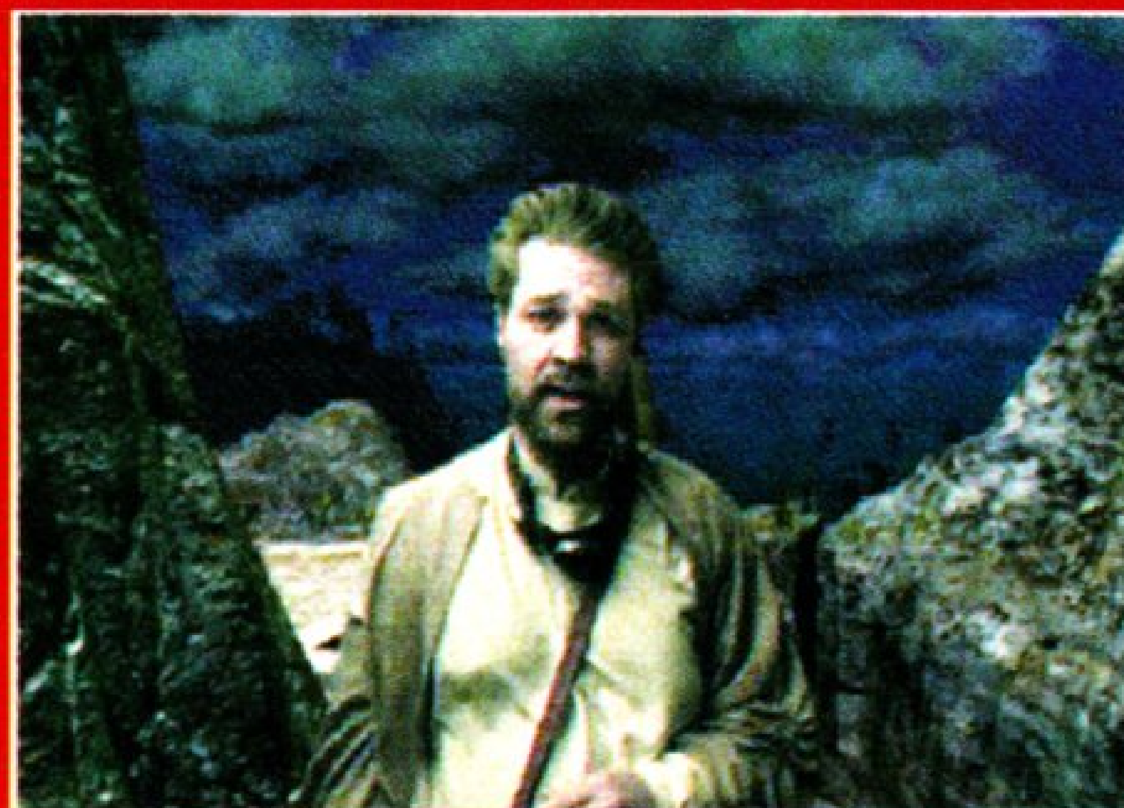
If you ignore Catherine's warning and try to signal Atrus with the device by the starting place before freeing Catherine from prison, the fissure opens up regardless, giving you a very nasty version of the standard ending. Atrus comes running out of the portal, asking you what's going on, then sees the empty linking book in your hand. By the time he realises what's going on, Gehn arrives and shoots him. Then Gehn comes up to you and says "I don't know what you think you were doing, but thank you. Now I'm finally free!", then his guard shoots you dead as well! An almost comic moment of extreme tragedy.

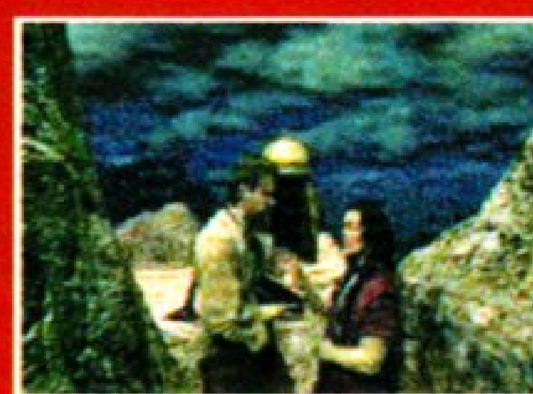
SIGNALLING ATRUS TOO EARLY: PART TWO

If you trap Gehn first, but fail to free Catherine before opening up the void and signalling to Atrus, you're treated to an ending fairly similar to the normal sequence, only this time Atrus is much sadder since there's still a lot of work left to be done. Catherine hasn't been saved or given the opportunity to save the villagers when Riven is destroyed. Still, looking on the bright side, at least you don't get shot, sucked into the fissure or called stupid in this one!

SIGNALLING ATRUS TOO EARLY: PART THREE

If you save the game near the beginning, and have a read of Catherine's journal to discover the telescope code, it's possible go back to the original save position


"Yeah, thanks. Nice of you. Now sod off and leave me alone."

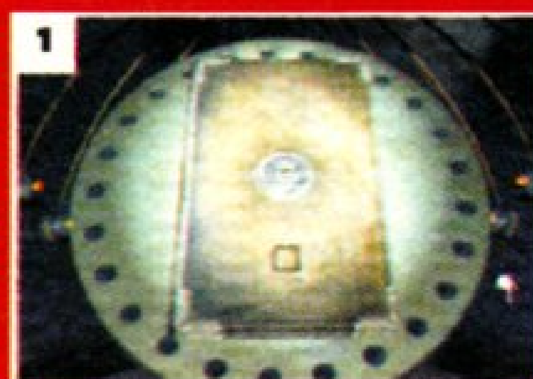
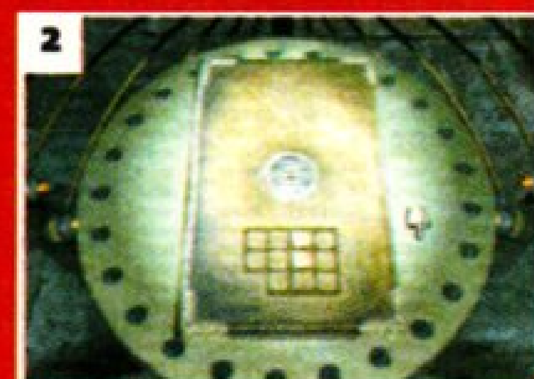


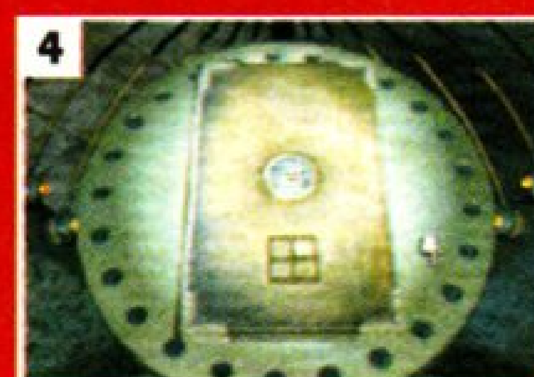
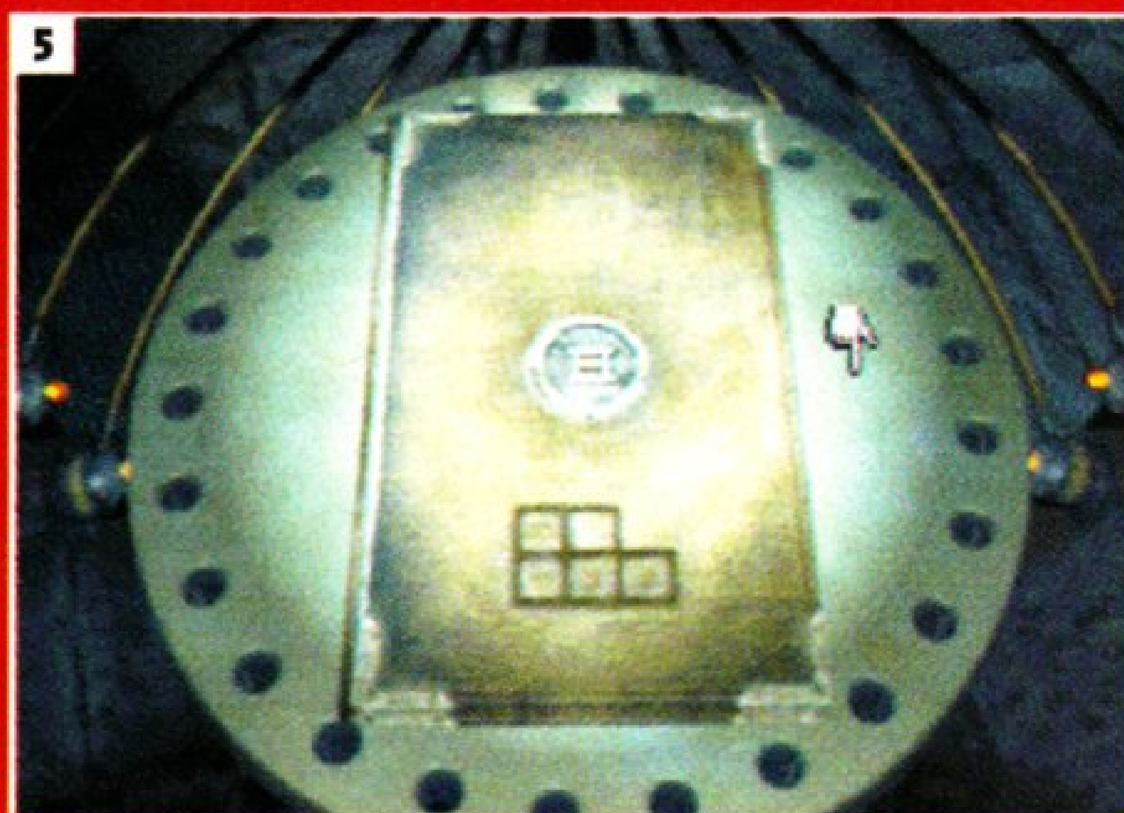
Get this far without a guide and you're a bloody genius!

near the beginning and enter the sequence in the telescope before any other events are set into motion. In that case, Atrus is not signalled and no one shows up to greet you before you are sucked into the void yourself. A rather stupid thing to do, if we're being honest, but possible nonetheless.

KILLED BY AN IMPATIENT AND ANGRY GEHN

When you give the linking trap book to Gehn, he views it rather suspiciously and asks you to go through first, as he rightly guesses that it may be some kind of trap. If you refuse to go first, he tells you to come back when you've changed your mind. If you come back and refuse again, he tells you not to come back again unless you're seriously prepared to help him. If you come back a third time and refuse, he just gets really impatient and shoots you! His annoyance is quite worth seeing: "You see? I HAVE changed. There was a time when I would have let you live. I made that mistake once with Atrus..."


1

2

3

4

5

When you first start to open the big spinning domes, you notice that the books only contain a blank area, and seem completely useless. It's only at the very end that all of these island-linking books (shown above in all their gathered-together glory) become active, and from Gehn's place right at the end, it becomes possible to whizz off to any island you like, studying changes, checking details or just looking around. Personally, I'm off to rest my brain and never even think about Riven again. It's over! Finished!

COIN-OPERATED

As the cornerstone of Sega's arcade development, AM2 have given us some of the greatest coin-op ever created. Now they're set to take the gaming world by storm with a revolutionary 3D beat 'em up. WARREN HARROD reports.

SPIKEOUT

Sega's big summer fighting game, Spikeout, is nearing completion and it's looking great! Having recently played a 70% complete version at a secret location test, we're at last able to shed some light on how AM2's latest 3D beat 'em up actually plays. And the good news is... it's more ground breaking than you could possibly imagine. However, there are still many unknown areas to be revealed, including the plot and fighting system, so expect big changes and new features to be unveiled next month.







▲ We can't wait for Spikeout to hit UK arcades!



FIST-POUNDING FEATURES! MULTI-BATTLE FIGHTING

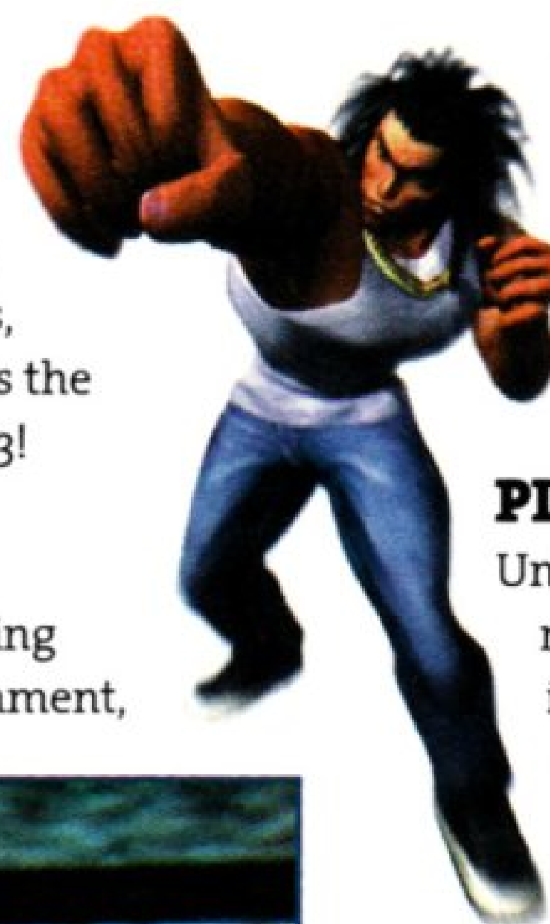
One of Spikeout's special features is its use of fibre optical cables to connect arcade cabinets together so that real-time four player network games are possible. Of course one player fighting is still possible, but the emphasis is now on mutual cooperation between players which makes the game far more enjoyable.

SPRAWLING CITYSCAPE

The game is set in one huge city block area containing such stages as Down Town and the Department Store. Players are not just able to move in standard directions, but also via staircases and escalators enabling characters to freely explore each stage as they desire. Players are also capable of battling opponents whilst riding these moving platforms. This goes far beyond the Undulation system used in Virtua Fighter 3, as the game's terrain actually enables players to plan and execute sneak attacks from a multitude of vantage points. So remember: keep your eyes peeled! Each of Spikeout's stages is divided into a number of smaller yet distinct areas. By achieving a certain objective, you're able to advance to the next area. In total there are 12 stages, each of which is approximately 80 times the size of the stages seen in Virtua Fighter 3!

VARIABLE SITUATIONS

Depending on the number of participating players and the current fighting environment, the situation for a given area will be different for each game. Additional players who join in will also affect the game's scenarios. With so many possibilities available, Spikeout will be a completely new experience every time you play it!



PLAYER FREEDOM

Unlike other scrolling games, that have up to now continuously forced players to keep moving forwards, Spikeout gives you total freedom of movement within each stage. Not only can you advance forward, but you can also turn around and return to other parts of the area you've already been to before. There are no ring-like stages, the entire town is yours to explore! In addition, there are also junctions throughout the stages where players may choose their own routes as well.



▲ The amazing graphical detail and realism in Spikeout is provided by the incredibly powerful Model 3 Step 2 arcade board.



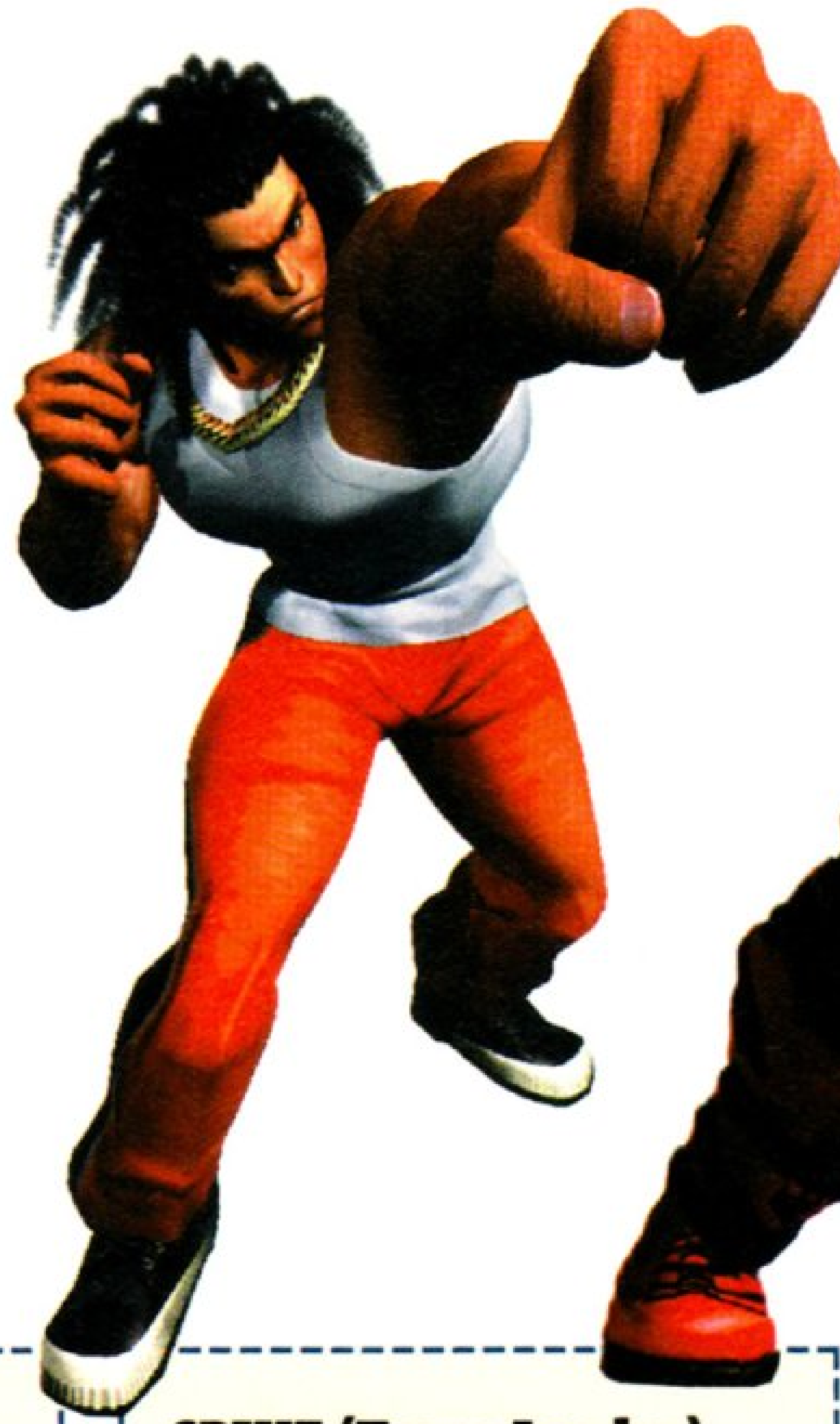




▲ Facing enemies on your own is never a good idea...









LINDA
Height: 172cm Age: 23
Birthplace: Unknown
Occupation: Unknown
Fighting Style: Employs kick techniques to make use of her long legs! A compact fighter who doesn't have any unnecessary moves.

TENSHIN
Height: 193cm Age: 23
Birthplace: Japan
Occupation: Japanese Mafia
Fighting Style: Uses a lot of wild spinning attacks where he swings his long arms around. Also has his own unique Kempo style.

SPIKE (Team Leader)
Height: 185cm Age: 27
Birthplace: USA (New York)
Occupation: Former Boxer
Fighting Style: Strong, straight punches are his main attack. Uses his strength to smash his opponents to pieces!

WHITE
Height: 185cm Age: 25
Birthplace: USA (New York)
Occupation: Army
Fighting Style: Uses a lot of uppercuts and powerful hits. Has a good balance of punch and kick combinations.

REALISTIC CHARACTERS

There are four player characters to choose from, of which Spike is the leader. Each character has their own unique attacks and characteristic fighting styles. In addition, there are loads of special enemy characters as well. Each character's clothing is actually based on current street styles and not typical game-like costumes. The boss characters are immediately recognisable because of their immense size!

ENEMY ACTION

Previous multi-player fighting games have usually featured enemies attacking one after the other, but in Spikeout your foes are present in large numbers (often over 10 at a time!). Fighting so many people at once requires players to master a variety of new fighting techniques. Team play is usually the essential key to defeating them and preventing minimum injury to yourself. The enemy characters are also intelligent enough to surround a lone player and then pound them into submission unless help arrives.





▲ Linda may be a babe, but she's a bitch in combat!



▲ We're not ones to applaud mob violence, but Spikeout's gang-based bullying has us gagging for more! Yeah, boyz!



▲ White unleashes his trademark uppercut on a street punk.



▲ You can even take out opponents using other players!



▲ The map appears when players have achieved their objectives. The arrows guides you to the next stage.



FIRST LIVE LOCATION TEST REPORT: SSM EXCLUSIVE!

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE's Japanese correspondent was one of the first people in Japan to play Spikeout at a special Tokyo arcade location test. Here's what he thought of AM2's latest offering: "Using one joystick and four buttons (Shift, Attack, Charge and Jump), Spikeout employs a completely new 3D fighting game system. Although much simpler in terms



of control, there are various special attacks which need careful timing and skill. The emphasis is now on group play against large numbers of enemies as opposed to one-on-one tactics.

The game's two player linked cabinets featured all four selectable characters and kicked off in the Down Town stage. Nobody was seen progressing further than this stage, so whether the game's other levels are playable yet is unknown.

Spikeout's camera view is controlled by the computer and is intelligent enough to automatically choose the best angle for you. The action is fast, but well-paced, with sufficient pauses allowing players to get their bearings before advancing onwards. As players progress, enemy characters appear from all around, sometimes coming out of buildings or from behind walls. This forces you to keep checking behind you as well. The on-screen map isn't too obstructive and is easy to understand so you won't find yourself getting lost.

Each area is blocked off to prevent players proceeding unless that particular area's finishing condition has been reached. Once this condition is cleared, a message appears telling you to smash through a gate, fence or wall. At first you can't usually see it, but if you keep turning around you'll eventually encounter this flashing sign. A single attack will break through and you're able to advance. In order to prevent players from returning to the previous area, AM2 have incorporated elements in the game to block your retreat. For example, an oil tanker is driven across the road blocking the street or you have to jump down from an unfinished staircase. However, each area is still very large and the game never forces you forward unless you're running out of time.

Spikeout's graphics may look simple in these screenshots, but in reality there is a lot of detail and it's worth remembering that AM2's Model 3 Step 2 hardware is in fact reproducing an entire town in 3D. Having hired some architects to help with the building design, the whole town looks very realistic. There are plenty of objects around the streets which you can interact with, such as trash cans and mail boxes, and even when there are no enemies you can smash up the town instead! The characters' smooth motions are obviously the work of the elite VF3 team and far surpasses anything they've ever done before.

The new style fighting action that Spikeout introduces is, in one word, fun! You'll enjoy the excitement of being able to choose which enemy to fight next and get a real kick (no pun intended) out of helping your friends when they get into trouble. Oh, by the way. We can't say much now, but you'll also be amazed at the radical cabinet design as well!!"



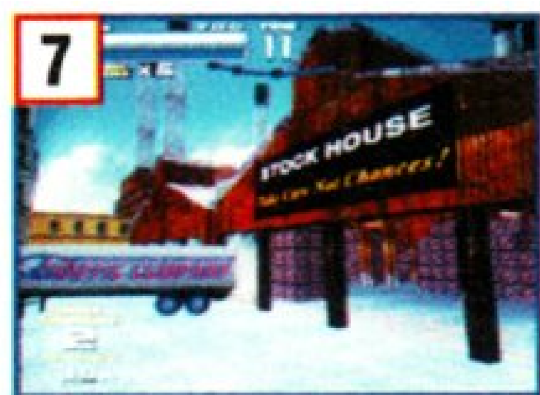
▲ With cabinets linked by fibre optic cables, Spikeout is the ultimate multi-player arcade fighting game!



▲ It's possible to beat up multiple opponents with one hit.

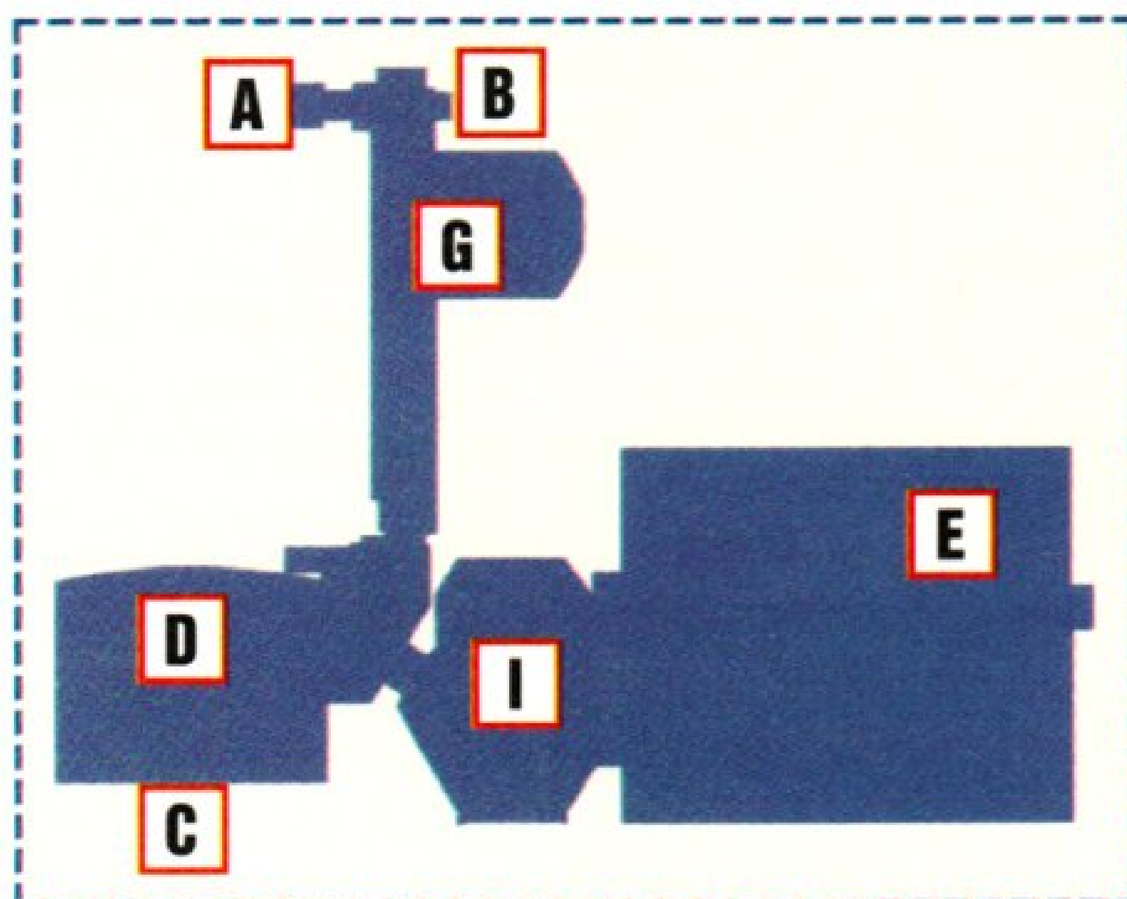


▲ The action starts in the shady Down Town stage.





FIRST FLOOR







▲ Use the escalator to battle on or ride to other levels.



▲ The shopping mall contains a number of cool shops.

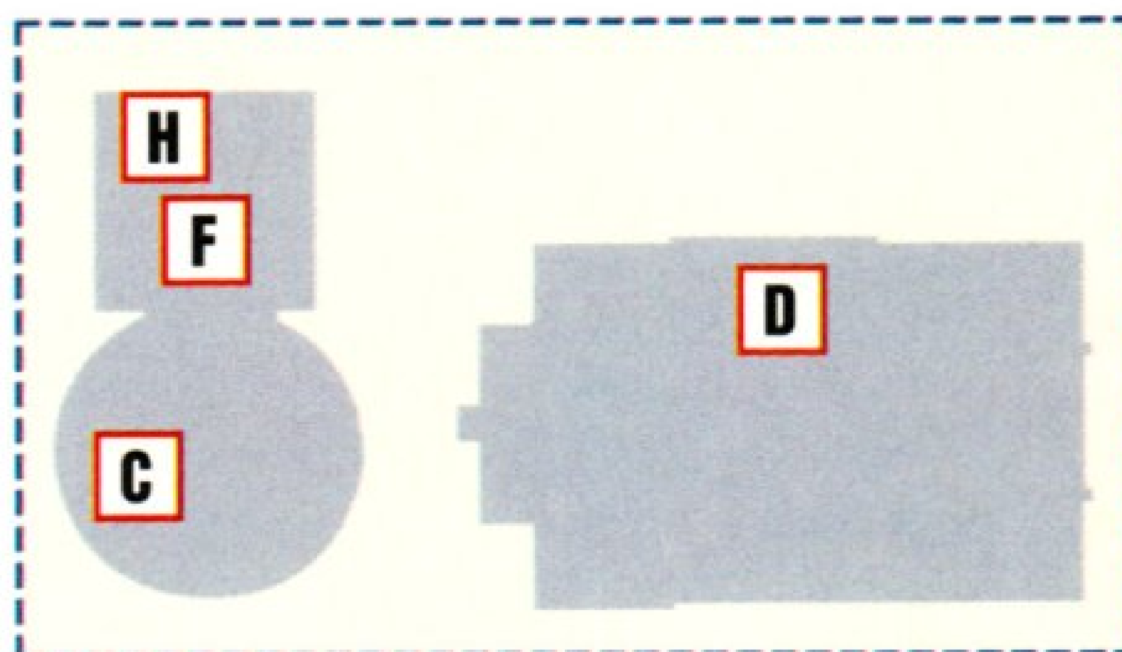




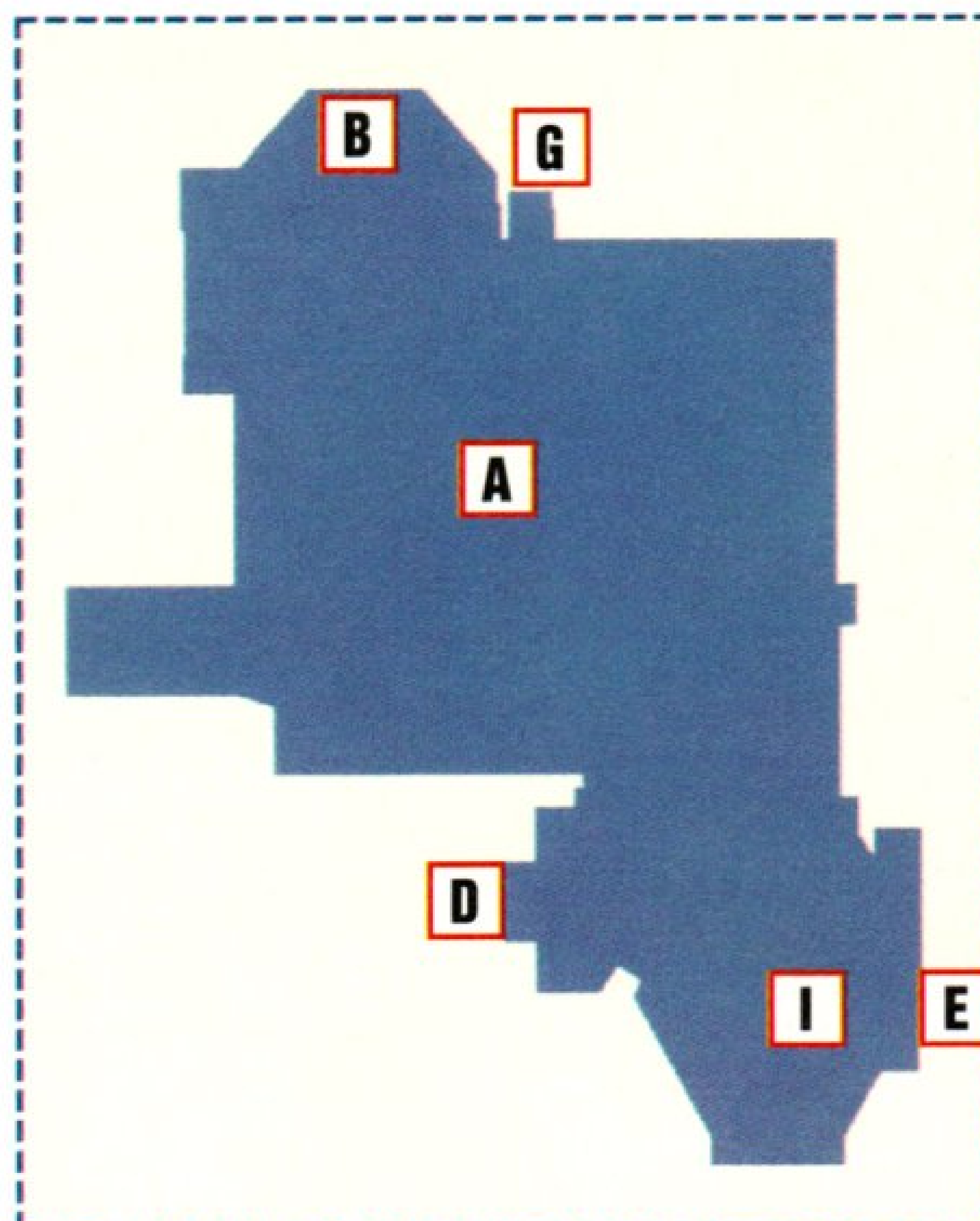


▲ Basement Car Park: Includes realistically detailed cars!

SECOND FLOOR



BASEMENT



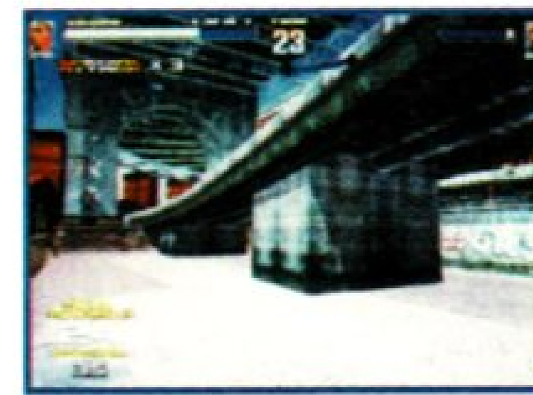


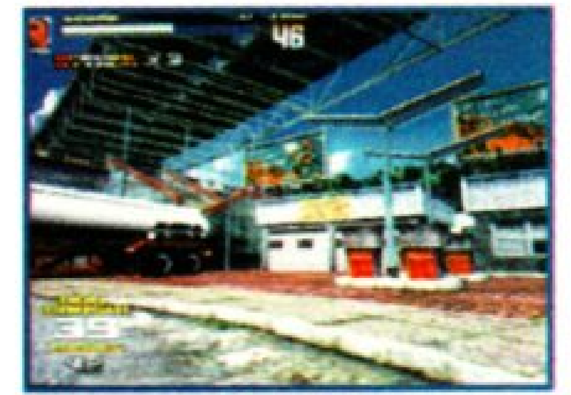
▲ Fight opponents in the CD shop and send discs spinning!





▲ Stunning views of the highway and basketball court.



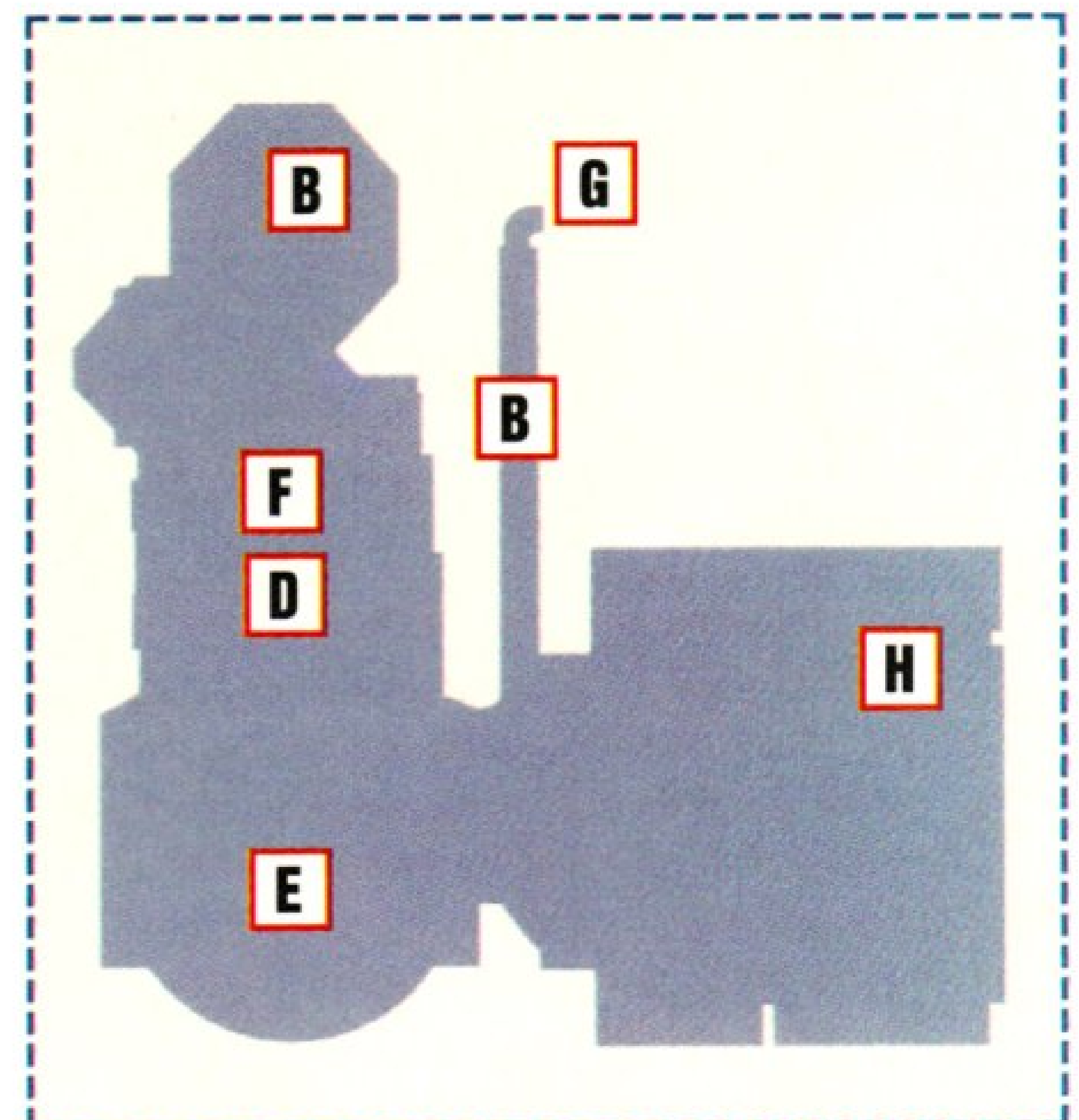


▲ Battle beneath a bridge or at a petrol station!



▲ Underground Sewer: Exits from the shopping mall and continues on to the factory stage.

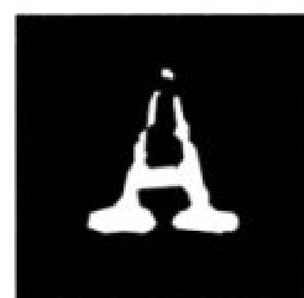
THIRD FLOOR





▲ Hey, it wouldn't be a Sega game without Sonic!

ASURA BLADE: SWORD OF DYNASTY



Asura Blade is a game we've been keeping secret since it was first revealed at last February's AOU Show, but it's been well-worth the wait. This great looking fighting game boasts the same of kind of excellently designed characters and visually incredible attacks that usually only Capcom is famous for. It's certainly an arcade game worth looking out for this summer!

The action takes place in a fantasy world of sword 'n' sorcery where an ancient kingdom's most powerful warriors are fighting each other in an effort to obtain the legendary sword, the Asura Blade. It is said that the person who possesses this weapon will be able to rule the kingdom and claim great wealth and power... and there can only be one winner!

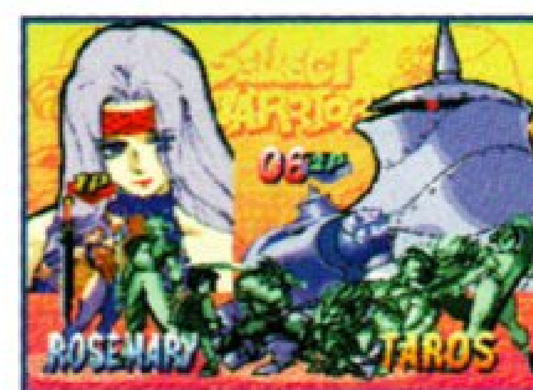
There are eight standard characters (plus sub and final bosses) each of which has their own unique fighting techniques. Whether you play as a huge sword-wielding fighter, a female martial artist or a necromancer capable of controlling the dead, you'll appreciate both the great character animation and over-the-top attacks. There are eleven beautiful stages in total, each one of which perfectly captures the mystical world of the game's characters.



Asura Blade is aimed at casual arcade players, with a simple combat system that deliberately avoids unnecessary complexity. However, beat 'em up fans will discover that precision timing reveals hidden gameplay depths, with finely tuned combos and plenty of variation in standard attacks.

Each character possesses special attacks and a unique weapon, both of which may be used in a variety of combinations. Not only can you attack with your weapon, but by pressing all three buttons at the same time, you can actually throw your weapon at your opponent. However, you are then left weaponless until you pick your implement off the floor.

There are also various special magical attacks to be accessed. These include the Magic Boost, which allows you to power-up your attacks and give them new capabilities (different for each character), and the Magic Break, which lets you execute a super-sure killing technique. Other new features included in Asura Blade are the Blast Away Attack, which lets you send your opponent flying into the air with a super attack executed by pressing any two attack buttons simultaneously. There's also the Push Back Guard, which lets players push back an opponent's attack, opening them up for a cool counter attack. Keep your eyes peeled for Asura Blade in arcades this summer!



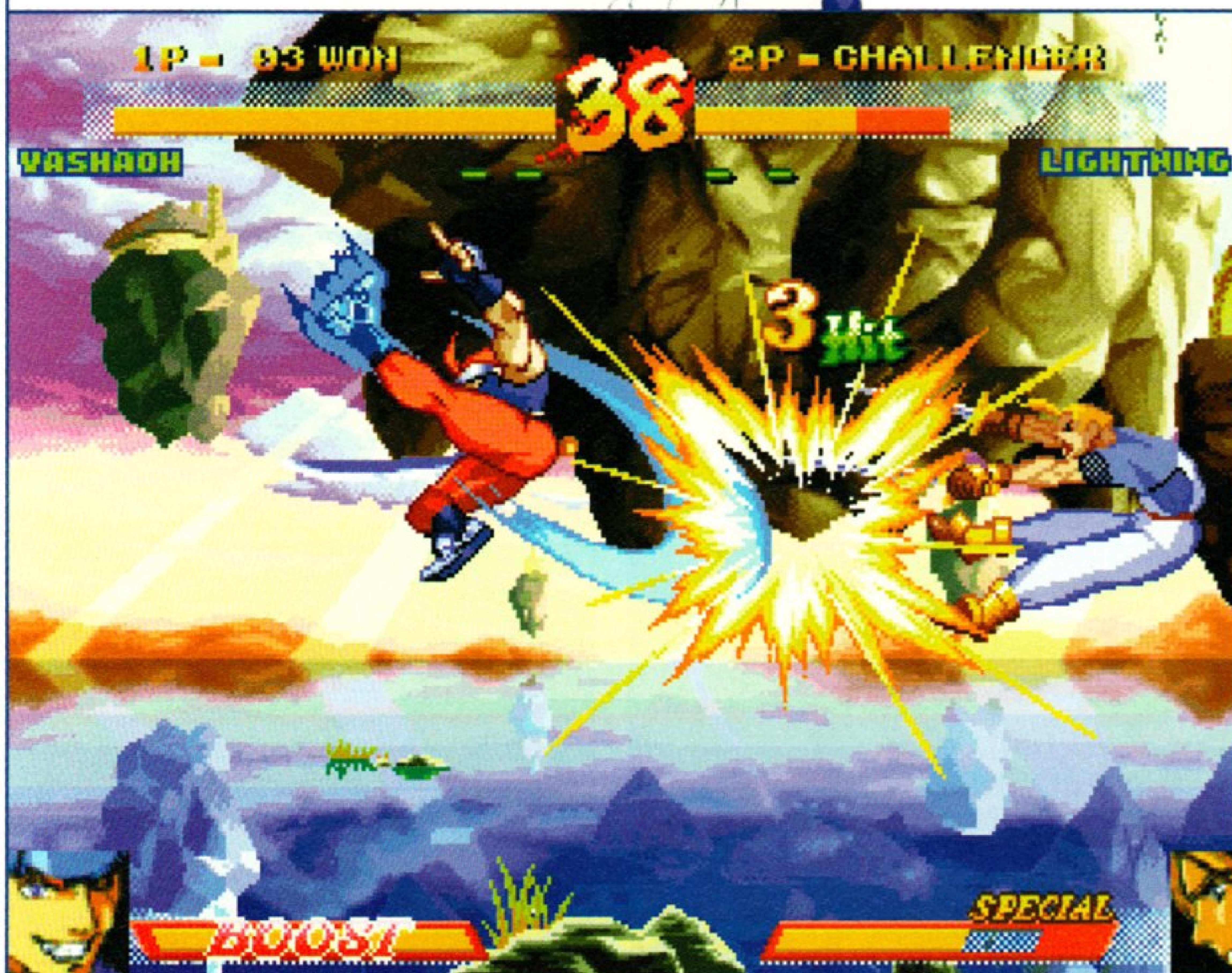


▲ Eight playable characters are on offer and there are many sub-bosses and end-of-level guardians to battle.



▲ Asura Blade boasts many graphically awesome moves.





▲ Powering up your character's Special bar opens up a whole new world of super attack related tomfoolery!



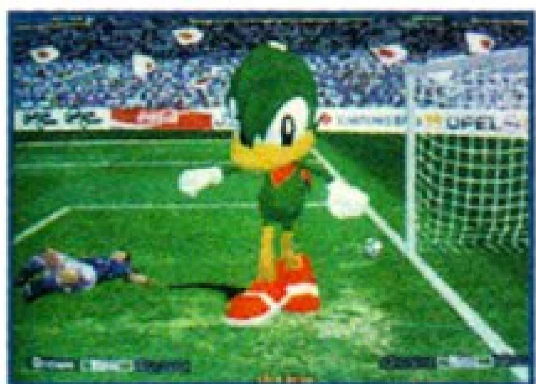
▲ It may look like an SNK game, but it's Fuuki behind this hit.

COIN-OPERATED UPDATE

We've already mentioned our big plans for SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE in past issues... and Coin-Operated is no exception. As part of our on-going quest to bring you the latest arcade information and developer updates, we're proud to present a one-on-one chat with Virtua Striker 2's Kentaro Fujita and Satoshi Mifune. WARREN HARROD asks the questions.



▲ Japanese gamers recently took part in a VS2 tournament.







SSM Why did you decide to create a new version of Virtua Striker 2?

AM2 Obviously we had the perfect excuse to do it because of the World Cup in France. However, it's also been over a year since we first released VS2 and we thought it would be the right time to do some of the things we weren't able to do last time. We started development straight after the first VS2.

SSM What are the major differences in the '98 edition?

AM2 Because of the different teams in the World Cup, we've taken out Sweden, Greece, Portugal, Uruguay and Russia and added Scotland, Romania, Paraguay and South Africa. In addition, instead of starting the game with one fixed team formation, you can now choose from two types of formation. There are also lots of small things, like the Rainbow Goal during the goal replay and the detailed game data which shows the number of goals saved and shoot rate displayed after each match.

SSM How have you improved the gameplay?

AM2 We've redone all the soccer players' movements and tactics to make them even more realistic. This is the biggest change to the game as we had to completely readjust the entire program to maintain the game balance. You'll notice that the individual players' actions are handled much better now.

SSM Is VS2 now perfect or can we expect a '99 version next year?

AM2 You can't really say a game's perfect, although we have accomplished everything we set out to do for this version. I still think there are things we could improve on... maybe in our next game!



▲ The Sega Virtua Striker's Cup '98 was held on May 30th in Shinjuku, Tokyo. The victor was Mr Ujihiro Fujiyama who played as Croatia and won a trip to France '98!



▲ Mr Satoshi Mifune, Producer of Virtua Striker 2: Version '98.



▲ Virtua Striker 2's Main Programmer: Mr Kentaro Fujita.



▲ Sega's public shows always draw a huge crowd.

Up the back end

This month we finally got a few VMS devices in from Japan and saw pictures of the first Dreamcast game. The future is looking good, folks. With this techno-heavy world on the way we thought it would be a good time to ask...

Our Favourite Sad Internet Sites

We're supposed to use our office Internet access for work purposes, so here are our 'official' favourite sites, in case anyone asks.

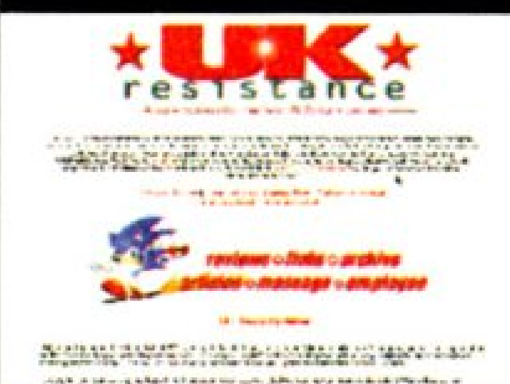
1. Seganet
www.seganet.com
Bizarrely run by an Argentinean kid, Seganet rarely miss out on a scoop. Plus there's always the opportunity for football-based slurs and insults.




2. Next Generation
www.next-generation.com
Not as good as it used to be for some inexplicable reason, but still most folk's first click of the day. Can be a bit over technical and self-congratulatory, but usually produces the goods.




3. UK:Resistance
www.jona.demon.co.uk/ukresist.htm
Hooray for the Brits! The only 100% Sega-based UK site has long since given up covering games, opting instead for a diet of nonsense, fake news and gratuitous pictures of women - which is what we like.

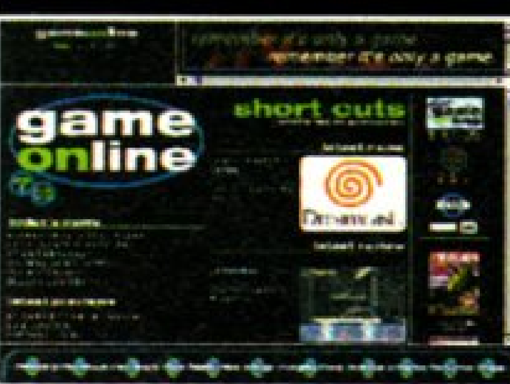




4. Sega Japan
www.sega.co.jp
A sprawling metropolis of a site, but worth it for the odd exclusive - the Sonic Adventure conference was first announced to the world right here, along with the incredible Godzilla pictures!




5. Game Online
www.game-online.com
They work next to us, so we have to include them.





ARE YOU ADDICTED TO THE INTERNET? Yes, the Internet is uploading itself to a computer near you, leaving a trail of square-eyed, mouse-clicking techno-geeks in its all-conquering information wake. Are you addicted to the Internet? Find out with this handy self-help test.

1. What's the name of your best friend?
a. Colin
b. Dave
c. Rachel
d. Cyberjacker@mail.infonet.com

2. What's the address of your favourite web site?
a. Don't have one
b. Can't remember
c. www er... something com?
d. http://105.236.251.130/cgi-bin/104673/site/index.html

3. When did you last talk to someone?
a. Two minutes ago
b. This morning
c. Yesterday
d. 1993

4. Who was the last person you spoke to?
a. Your mum
b. Your best friend
c. Your work colleague
d. Your Internet service provider's technical support department, of course

5. Why was the Internet invented?
a. To spread Satan's words of evil
b. To create a global community
c. As some kind of defence system
d. To provide unlimited free pornography

6. Can you type with one hand?
a. No

STEADY ON OLD CHAP!

This section of the magazine is dedicated to the bloke who phoned us, desperately trying to get hold of some of the girlfriend games we printed pictures last month. We reckon that £2.50, your local newsagent and a copy of 'Razzle' would be more up your street, mate. Here are a few pics to tide you over.







▲ We nearly had Deep Fear on the cover this month, but dropped this idea when the awesome Godzilla pics arrived!

b. Yes, but very slowly
c. Yes, quite well
d. Yes, 85 words per minute

7. What do you say when you're not feeling very well?
a. I've got a tummy ache
b. I feel sick
c. I'm going to be sick
d. :-(

8. What's the worst thing about using the Internet?
a. It's brainwashing our children
b. It's too complicated
c. It's too slow
d. Only 24 hours in a day

9. What's the best thing about the Internet?
a. Keeps weirdos off the streets
b. Email
c. Information at your fingertips
d. Making friends, learning things, having fun, free



JAPANESE ADVERT OF THE MONTH

Winning Post 3 is a Japanese horse racing game for the Saturn. This is the cool advert which ran for about three months, making everyone who saw it want a copy of the game for no apparent reason. By the way, the game does feature horses, not those people in the blinkers.



pornography, and much, much more!

10. How important is the Internet in your life?
a. Couldn't care less
b. An interesting diversion
c. An important business tool
d. It's the very life blood of information flowing through my veins

11. Have you ever spoken to a woman for six months, before finding out 'she' is actually a 62-year-old Redneck American male called Chuck?
a. No
b. No
c. No
d. Yes

◀ Carol – only slightly less-powerful than the Dreamcast.



▲ Don't cry, it just makes me want to hurt you more.

HOW DID YOU ANSWER?

Mostly a: "We don't loike strangers 'round these parts."

Mostly b: Your video flashes 12:00am all the time and your microwave is permanently set to 'defrost'. Quite harmless.

Mostly c: You're quite well-adjusted, showing a healthy interest in new technology and a mildly inquisitive nature.

Mostly d: Download me a kipper for breakfast, you're an Internet addict - seek help now!

6. Fastest Gaming News Online

www.fgnonline.com
Put together by a British bloke in his garden shed, who basically copies stuff from UK trade papers for the Americans to read. Quite good, but mainly a carbon-copy of the more in-depth Next Generation.




7. Gamesages

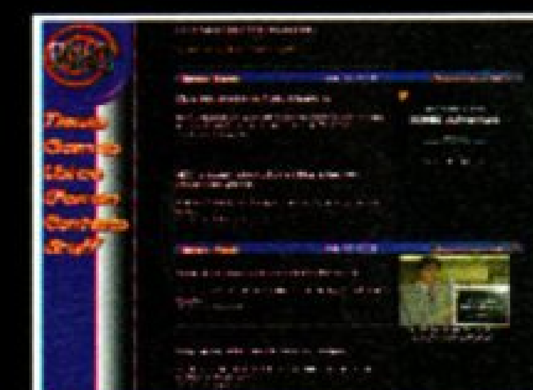
www.segasages.com
A huge archive of tips and walkthroughs for games, perfect for those 'I'm stuck on a game' moments, and even more helpful if you're just rubbish at games in general.




8. Dreamcast HQ

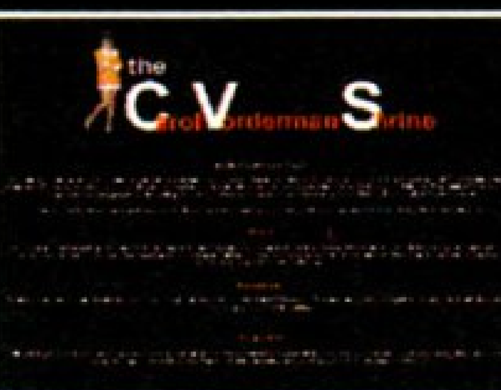
http://duralhq.interspeed.net
Registered that address before the name 'Dreamcast' was chosen, Dural HQ underwent a swift redesign when Dreamcast emerged. Virtually identical news to Seganet, and loads of other sites, but has a nice logo, so makes our list.

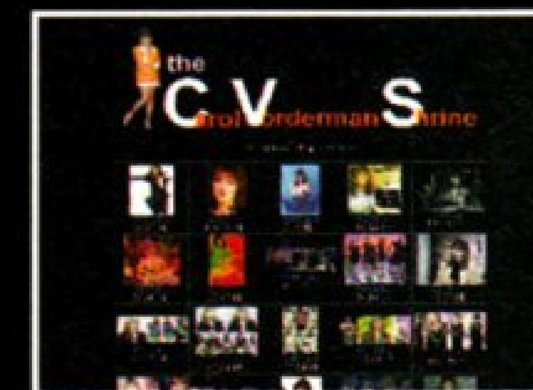




9. The Carol Vorderman Shrine

http://members.xoom.com/cleftycvs
Okay, so there are only eight decent games sites in the world. Carol does have a brain that's nearly as powerful as the Dreamcast, so qualifies by sheer processing power alone. We don't fancy her. Much.





10. Anna Kournikova

www.annak.com
Tennis is a game, isn't it? Anna provides us with a little relief every day, and they do say that all work and no play makes Johnny a dull boy. Who wants to play with Anna? Hey, steady on, not all at once!




and finally...

Pai Chan

Kick-Ass Kung-Fu Sex Kitten!





Bouyant Pai demonstrates the breast stroke to Sarah (left). The Stalker Cam (right).

It's something that's been puzzling us here at SSM for some considerable time. Why do so many of our prepubescent readers overlook the salacious curves of Virtua Fighter's Pai Chan in favour of blonde bimbo Sarah Bryant? Odd that.

The emotionally troubled femme fatalé looks as if butter wouldn't melt in her mouth, doesn't she? Well don't you believe it for a second - check out the damning evidence on this page. The 23-year-old martial arts movie star likes nothing better than being given a 'splash mountain' from hunky Oz fisherman, Jeffry McWild, whilst Akira 'jabs' at her rear end and Wolf gives her the old 'body press' routine. And the less said about his 'double knuckle' the better.

But we love Pai here at SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, or more specifically, we love her perfectly pert polygonal protrusions. Yep, watching Pai in action gives a whole new meaning to the term 'hardened games player'.

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- ✔ LINES OPEN 9am-8pm MONDAY - FRIDAY, 10am-7pm SATURDAY, 10am-4pm SUNDAY. ANSWERPHONES ALL OTHER TIMES.
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Item description	Price
	£
	£
	£
	£
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SA3(9)

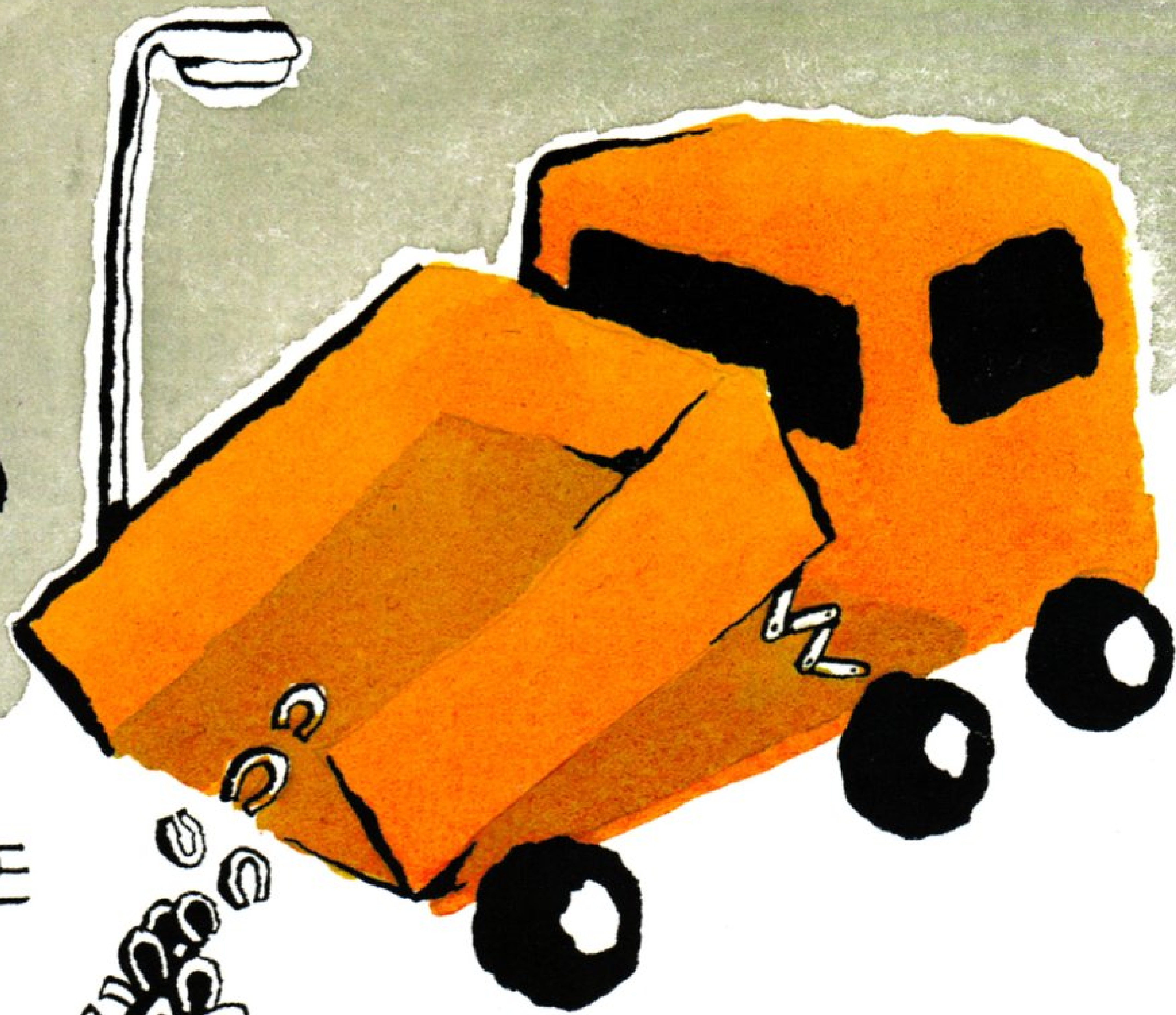
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